The Three Apprentices of Moon Street

BY

GEORGES MONTORGUEIL

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THE

THREE APPRENTICES

OF

MOON STREET.

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OF

MOON STREET

FROM THE FRENCH OF

GEORGES MONTORGUEIL

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY LOUIS LE RÈVEREND AND PAUL STECK

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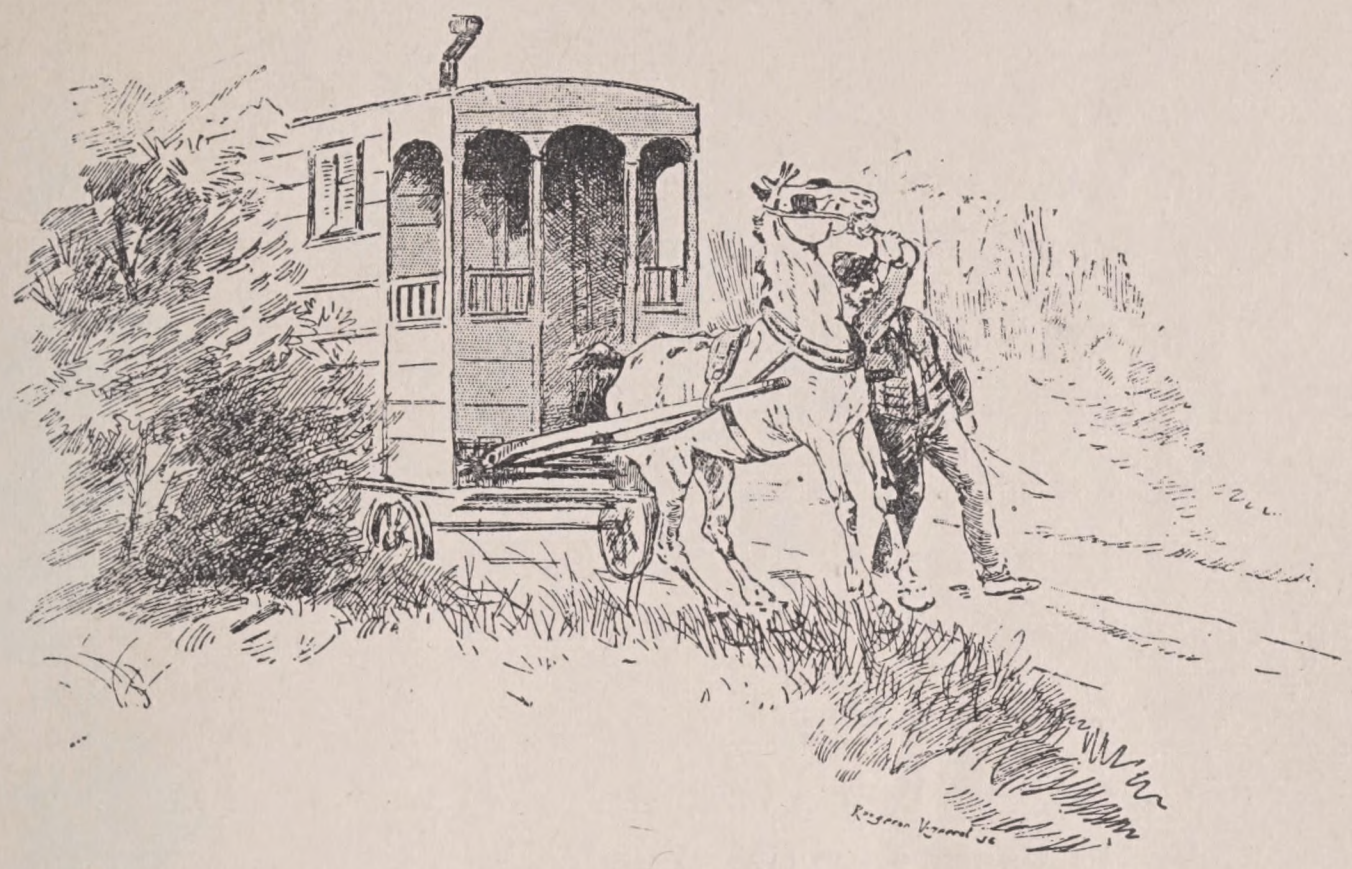


CONTENTS.

Chapter		Page
I.	"Apprentice wanted"	7
II.	Mother Bonnet	18
III.	Johnnie	29
IV.	John	38
V.	Jack	51
VI.	Jack plays Tricks	61
VII.	Bisquine	72
VIII.	The Broken Bough	84
IX.	A Game of Marbles	104
X.	Bisquine on the Trail	112
XI.	John's Savings	120
XII.	The Robbery	125
XIII.	The Thief discovered	134
XIV.	Escape	143

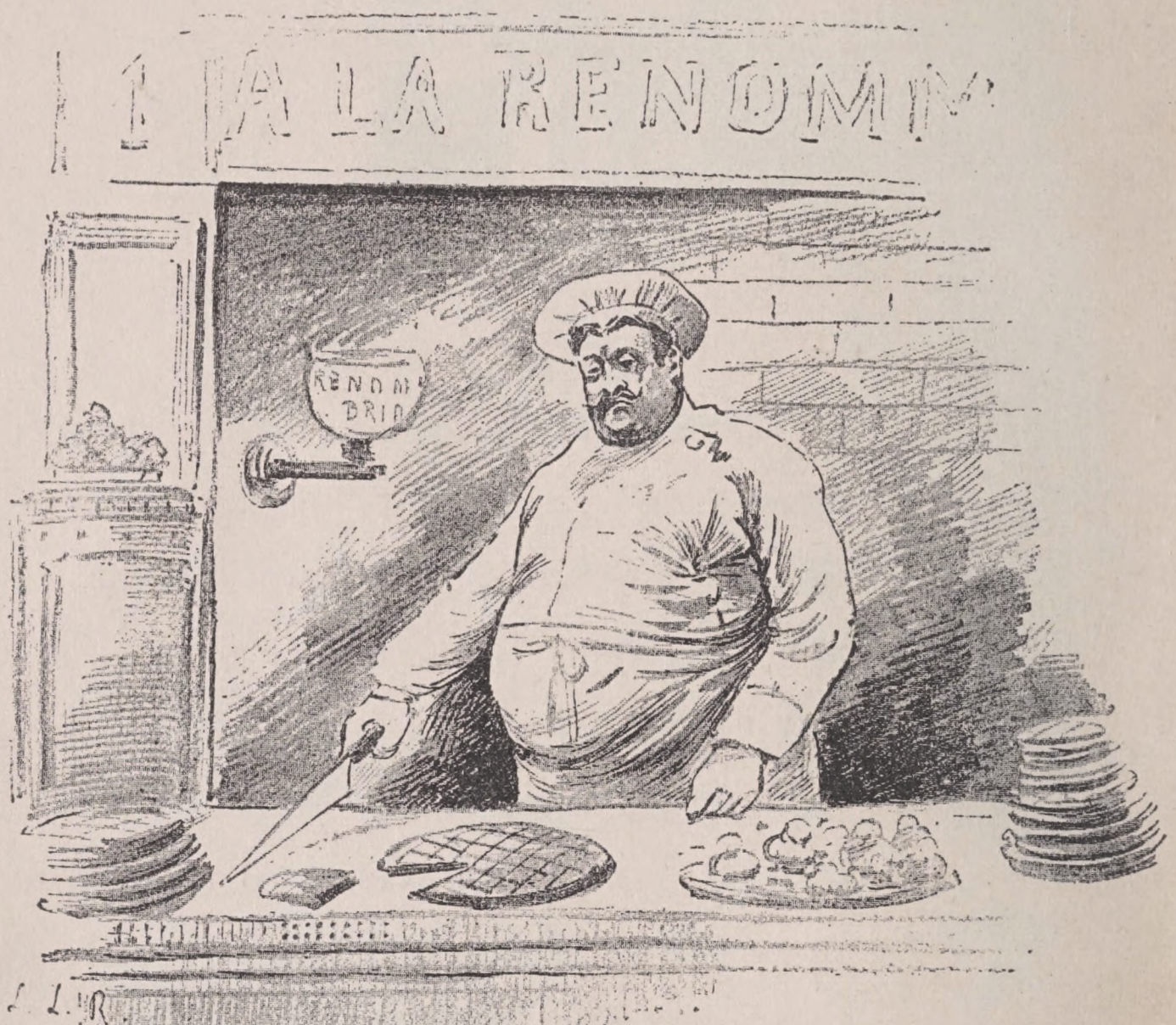
Chapter		Page
XV.	At the Gingerbread Fair	149
XVI.	Away to the Country	194
XVII.	Theodulus	201
XVIII.	A Strange Animal	209
XIX.	By Permission of the Mayor	217
XX.	Suzette	224
XXI.	Left Alone	231
XXII.	Theodulus's Gluttony	238
XXIII.	Zany at Liberty	245
XXIV.	A General in Petticoats	250
XXV.	In Pursuit of the Monkey	256
XXVI.	Old Grigou's Sorrow	265
XXVII.	Hours of Anguish	276
XXVIII.	A Visit to the Mayor	281
XXIX.	Suzette is found	288
XXX.	At the Neuilly Fair	299
XXXI.	Great Excitement in Moon Street	307
Epilogue		316

I.

"APPRENTICE WANTED."

THERE are a great many beautiful streets in Paris, but among them all Moon Street is not by any means the most lovely. It is short, narrow, and roughly paved. The buildings are poor old things, which only hold themselves upright by a miracle, and they lean upon one another as if they were trying their best to keep each other up. The pretty moon, shining like a bit of new silver, and letting fall its pure, soft radiance upon us, cannot be greatly flattered at being godmother to a thoroughfare of such sorrowful aspect and of such doubtful reputation. I warrant you, however, that little as you may know of Paris, and infrequent as may have been your rambles there, you know something of this

little street. Memories of other streets far more magnificent and more often frequented may have faded from your mind; but you remember Moon Street, and I will



tell you why, — you are little epicures, and you are fond of those delicate bits of pastry which we call *brioche.*

Now, on this very thoroughfare, — this was a long, long time ago, — a worthy man, clad as a pastry-cook in dazzling white, took up his station, and spent his

days wielding a great knife, with which he cut his confections to any size you wished, and because of his persistent industry was known everywhere about as "Father Cut-all-day." His rival in Moon Street has carved for me many a delicate slice, and I have a very firm recollection of him even to this day; for I should be an ingrate indeed if, because I had lost my love for pastry, I lost also remembrance of the pleasure that it gave me when I had not lost my love.

Not far from this sweet-smelling place, and in the same street, are the workshops of a jewellery-maker bearing the sign of "The Gold Bracelet." At the entrance, on two great copper shields one reads:—

MAISON DUPONT.

JEWELLERY OF ALL KINDS: BRACELETS A SPECIALTY.

UP THREE FLIGHTS AT THE REAR.

A kindly hand, stamped in black on the glittering copper, points out the direction that one must follow to reach the salesrooms and workshop.

On this particular day a young lad came out from the rear alley. He was bareheaded, and wore a blouse of black cambric. A single glance showed that he was not only an apprentice, but a jeweller's apprentice. In fact, it was Johnnie from Mr. Dupont's.

In his hand he held a small square of paper, covered with fresh paste on the back, and ready to be posted up on one of the copper shields. Just as he was about to fix it in place, his attention was distracted by a dog-fight which was going on in the street, and he paused to help it along a little. At this moment one of the tenants in the building was passing down the steps. Johnnie had not seen him; and turning suddenly with outstretched hand, he brought the placard right against the gentleman's coat, exactly in the middle of his back. It stuck fast. When Johnnie finally realized what he had done, the gentleman was already far down the street. He started in pursuit.

"Mister! Mister! You are carrying away my sign!"

But the gentleman was preoccupied, did not hear the call, and went on his way.

Johnnie ought to have been ashamed at his misadventure, but I am sorry to say that he manifested no indications of any such feeling. The disrespectful scamp burst out laughing at the sight of this poor man, who was going bravely about his business with a square of paper on his back bearing these words: —

APPRENTICE WANTED.

(SPEEDY PROMOTION.)

"Beg pardon, sir, what have you there?" asked the janitor, leading him before a mirror.

When the gentleman saw the inscription he was naturally angry; first, because his coat had been soiled, and secondly, because he had been made ridic-

ulous by going about as a walking advertisement without being paid for his services.

Johnnie stopped laughing when the angry gentleman came back toward him with a threatening gesture.

"You rascal! You'll stick posters on my back, will you?"

He caught the lad by the ears, not a difficult thing to do, as Johnnie's ears, in distinction from his wits, were rather long. The heedless fellow wept, supplicated, excused himself in every possible way, and was on the whole very pathetic. He gave a plausible though somewhat confused explanation.

"I don't know how it happened — I was trying to put the sign — on the door-post — and then" —

"And then my back got it, instead of the door-post." The fingers tightened on the prisoner's ear. His peril inspired Johnnie to an idea which was his salvation.

"Mister!" he cried, "while you are holding me by the ear the paste is drying."

"That is very true," said the gentleman, letting go of his captive. "Take it off quick."

"You won't beat me?"

"Eh? No; but hurry up."

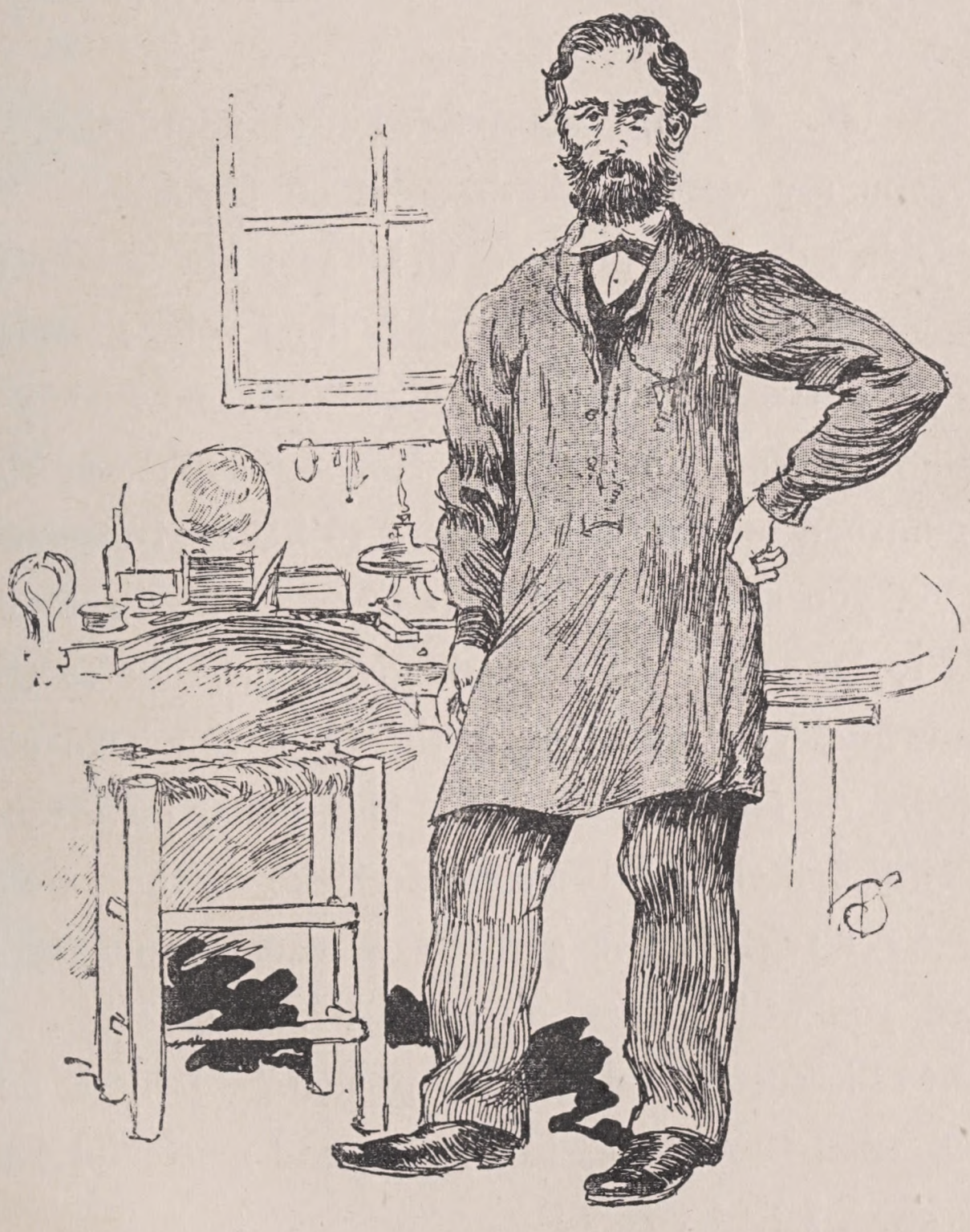
"Sure you won't?"

"No; but see here, you rascal, that thing is drying on."

Johnnie made the attempt, but the paste had done its duty; the paper stuck fast. He could only get off one little corner. It was too late. Very indignant, the gentleman was obliged to go up to his

quarters, adorned like a wall on which one is forbidden to post any bills.

At the top of the first flight, through the windows



of the stairway looking upon the court, the gentleman signalled to Johnnie threateningly. The young scamp, who was now out of reach of immediate punishment,

simply laughed. His hilarity was roughly cut short. A deep, well-known voice made him turn round all of a tremble.

"Stupid and full of tricks as ever!" said the big voice.

"O Mr. Griffin," stammered the apprentice, "I give you my word, I didn't do it on purpose."

"Didn't do it on purpose, eh?" said Mr. Griffin, the foreman of the workshops, in his deep voice; "was it not on purpose that you laughed just now at your heedlessness and insolence? No, my boy; you shall be punished for this. You were to have an afternoon off, but you shall keep to your work. There are some nails to be sorted — you shall give your time to that. Meanwhile, you must repair the fault you have committed. As for the poster, that is of minor importance. You will politely ask the clerk to make another one for you. As regards the gentleman whom you have insulted, you will not get off so easily. You will go at once to his rooms and beg his pardon." Johnnie hesitated. Mr. Griffin said in a grave and masterful tone, "At once, I told you."

"But I don't know where he lives, sir," said the apprentice, who counted upon this fact to secure his release from a disagreeable task.

"Lift your eyes, lad."

Johnnie looked up at the fifth story. He saw the tenant impatiently trying with a moistened sponge to soak off the poster which had dishonored the back of his coat.

"You see where he may be found — go immediately. It is not a pleasant duty, but it may help you to avoid worse things in the future."

Johnnie obeyed slowly, with bended head and downcast air, turning from time to time to see if the watchful Mr. Griffin was still there. Mr. Griffin was always there. Johnnie fetched a profound sigh, indicative of supreme resolution. "I'm in for it!" he said. And a moment later he rang at the gentleman's door. What took place at this interview? When he came down he was singing like a lark. His face had resumed its wonted cheerful expression. He was the outward and visible sign of the consciousness of a fault atoned for.

If it had not been for this interview which Mr. Griffin had so wisely insisted upon, what would have been the result? Johnnie would never have dared to venture in the neighborhood of the person he had injured. When the latter made his appearance, the lad would have been frightened and ashamed, and would have got

out of sight of his indignant victim as quickly as possible. The remembrance of the wrong he had done would have been a perpetual reproach. But now that he had sought and obtained pardon, his conscience was at peace, and his misconduct was not to be remembered with feelings of remorse, but as a lesson.

A new sign was made; and in giving it to Johnnie the clerk said, "Here, giddy-head; look out and don't go wrong again. This is not for posting up on people's backs, because I have got a little work of my own to do, and if you interrupt me again, I'll paste something over the end of your nose."

Johnnie was careful this time, and pasted the paper on the copper shield, "Apprentice Wanted," written in a bold, fancy hand, with superb flourishes, for

the clerk was rather proud of his chirography; that, to be sure, was about his only merit, but he had that. If he had not learned to write well at school, what would he have been good for, since without this accomplishment he would not have been good for anything?

II.

MOTHER BONNET.

SCARCELY had the placard been posted up, when it was read by at least a hundred persons; first by the curious, who read everything simply for the pleasure of reading; then by the unemployed, who are always at a loss to know what to do in order that they may not do anything; then by interested people, — workmen out of work, or parents looking for a place to apprentice their children.

An old woman, neatly but poorly clad, saw the poster as she was passing along the street. She tried to deci-

pher it ; but her eyes were sixty years old, and were not good at reading. She called to some small boys who were playing marbles, —

"Come here, boys ; your sight is good. Won't you please read what is written there?"

One of the boys looked at her with a droll and sheepish air. "There? Up there? Well, it says — it says — I don't know how to read."

And he was nine years old! That's what it is to go to school in the streets.

The aged dame took her spectacles from her basket, put them astride her nose, and managed to learn the import of the clerk's beautiful penmanship. The task accomplished, she folded up her spectacles, put them back in their case, and said, —

"This will be just the thing for little John. He wants to be a jeweller. I'll go right off and tell his folks about it."

She was hurrying along at a short-gaited trot, when an exclamation in a voice as worn as her own made her turn about, —

"Why, it's Mother Christian!"

Mother Christian looked earnestly into the other woman's face. Ah, she had a good ways to go for her recollections! Her memory was as weak as her

eyes, and they have not invented spectacles for the memory. At length, however, she made out who it was.

"For the land's sake, it's Mam' Bonnet. How we do meet, to be sure!"

Mother Bonnet was the best woman in the world.

In saying this no wrong is done to others. The best woman in the world, like the bravest man in the world, is fortunately a very numerous person.

Mother Bonnet owned to her sixty years. She had been nurse to Mr. Dupont, the jeweller. Yes; that great bearded man, now getting gray, once had a nurse. The child beyond the need of her care, she had remained with the family, making their joys and sorrows her own, and serving them with a fidelity which, if a little rough, was always very, very sincere.

One by one Mr. Dupont's relatives left him. One day the jeweller found himself sadly alone in the world, with no one to look after him but this good woman, who had nourished him in his infancy, and had become a sort of foster-mother. He let her stay on. She was his servant; but he would willingly have been a servant to her if their positions had been reversed, so much he thought of her. He never called her anything but "My good Mother Bonnet;" and, for her part, she simply adored her "Mr. Charles."

She adored also, — that was her only weakness, but who has not at least one? — she adored also "La Moune." La Moune was a cat, and was very handsomely attired. Nature had given her a magnificent

suit of furs in three colors that harmonized marvellously well. Is it necessary to add that she was somewhat vain, and that her stately walk had just the slightest affectation of coquetry? La Moune was inseparable from Mother Bonnet, who was often alone in the house, and she was such excellent company. When Mother Bonnet sat down to her sewing, La Moune would draw near nonchalantly and take her place close by, her four paws gracefully aligned, her head up, her nose black as a truffle, and sticking out between her small sharp teeth a dainty bit of rose-tinted tongue, which she seemed to be too indolent to draw back into place. Thus she would sit and purr, revealing her contentment in her green-tinted eyes, which were flecked with gold, and which she kept half-closed.

La Moune was altogether too well brought up ever to weary Mother Bonnet. Her small brain had assimilated the idea that if she wanted to make herself welcome in a house she must cultivate the qualities of good companionship. She was not given to making blunders of any sort, and her supple majesty of bearing did not invite reprimands. Madame Bonnet, indulgent as she was to her dainty fellow-lodger, would have been very much disturbed if La Moune had

failed to show proper respect for the laws of hospitality, and had interfered with the smooth working of the domestic machinery. If you want to be loved, be amiable — that is a truth that applies even to cats.

No assertive claws, no thefts of any account, none of those little overt acts which upset households; at the most a tap of the paw on a spool of thread that had fallen to the floor, — that was La Moune. Moreover, she seemed to be possessed of very endearing qualities. "She's my companion," Mother Bonnet would say. "I know by the way in which she washes herself whether it is going to rain or not, and simply by looking in her eyes I can tell what time it is."

If Mother Bonnet was rather exacting in regard to La Moune, it was because in spite of her considerable age she was a model of neatness. Her kitchen was polished until it shone, and her pots and kettles were like full-blown suns. How did she find the time to

do all that? How did she find the strength? She wanted to do it. To want to do a thing does not give you the power to do it, but it is certainly half the battle. In her person, which was apparently much the worse for wear, dwelt a fund of energy which many a youth might have envied. She never wasted her time or her pains; she rose with the chickens, — old people never like to lie abed; and when at nightfall, bent and broken, she trotted by the house, she had no fear except for idlenesss, — the foe that makes peevish days, long hours, and an empty and tiresome existence.

It is only fair to confess that she grumbled a little. One does not attain to half a century and ten years over without having one's little prejudices. But her grumbling was always good-natured; sometimes even her reproaches were only the result of tender affection. It was only to warn Mr. Charles not to go out without his muffler in the winter season; and if he had been out without his muffler, to warn him of the fact when he came in.

"You won't be satisfied till you get me to making gruel for you!" which, being properly translated, meant, "It always makes me sorry to see you ill!"

The jeweller was not dull of comprehension; and

when she grumbled in this way he would say to the grumbler, —

"What a dear good mother you are, Mother Bonnet!"

Everybody in the Dupont establishment thought the world of her, and she was kindness itself to them all. If a workman were suddenly taken ill, she ran to him with one of her simple, womanish remedies, which one is wrong to despise. She kept herself informed all about their children, for children were her joy. Ah, if Mr. Dupont had only married, what pleasure it would have been to her to act the part of guardian angel at the cradle! For want of a better object, she expended her sympathy upon the apprentices. Mr. Griffin maintained that she petted them altogether too much for their own good.

They ran little errands for her, fetched water, — running water had not yet been brought into all parts of buildings, — and rendered her many of those little services which cost them nothing and were, in fact, a pleasant distraction from toil. She paid them, not in money, but in motherly attentions, in sweetmeats, — she excelled in making crystallized green-gage plums, — in cups of chocolate (don't you think it's better than coffee?) which she put aside for them, and in fruit

which she slipped into their pockets, — juicy apricots, luscious, tawny pippins, and delicious, melting pears.

"You pet them too much, Mother Bonnet," Mr. Dupont would say. "I sha'n't be able to do anything with them."

"Poor little chaps," she would reply; "is it a crime to give them little dainties when they have been good? That's the way you were treated, Mr. Charles; it's natural to treat them that way too."

At that time Johnnie was the only apprentice in the shop, and he was not equal to all that had to be done. So they put up a notice for another, and that is why Mother Christian had thought of little John.

When the two good old women had revived their acquaintance, and had testified to their pleasure at seeing each other after the lapse of seventeen years; after they had told one another that little so and so was married, that little such and such was an employer, that this one formerly so lively was beginning to feel his age; that another who had formerly possessed such fine eyesight could not see without glasses; when they had italicised anecdotes and recollections of different signs of the march of time, punctuating their remarks with such phrases as, "Ah, we're no longer

as young as we were, Mother Christian!" or, "Ah, we're getting along in years, Mother Bonnet!" — after all this they began to talk about the present.

"I see they want an apprentice at the shop," said Mother Christian. "I know just the one for the place — a perfect treasure, a child of neighbors of mine — good honest people — excellent to my way of thinking — as good as bread. John is the boy's name. Say a good word for him, Mother Bonnet, to Mr. Dupont. I should be so happy to have him in a place near you. I am sure you will never repent of it, for I can give him the highest possible recommendation."

"All right," responded Mother Bonnet, nodding her head understandingly, "all right. Send your little friend to us, but don't lead him to expect too much. When it comes to children, I can't endure too much from them; I am inclined to make them toe the mark. What can you expect? I'm getting old. But Mr. Dupont is such a worthy man!"

"Oh, thank 'ee, thank 'ee," said Mother Christian, laughing a little jerky laugh, and showing her gums where only one tooth remained where once there had been thirty-two, "oh, thank 'ee, thank 'ee. I'll fly and tell them."

When she said "fly," that was her way of talking, and after all she meant what she said. The thought that she was a bearer of good news, and could do something for somebody, gave her poor old legs an elasticity of which she had long thought them incapable.

III.

JOHNNIE.

JOHNNIE was delighted to think that there was going to be a new apprentice. Was it because he thought he would have a companion of his own age, a comrade, another self, to whom he could confide his hopes and griefs? He was a youth living among men who did not comprehend the trials and tribulations of a lad of fourteen; he would have given much to recount them, but there were no ears indulgent enough to listen to his tale. That was pitiable; for there is no trouble which is not half assuaged by being confided to an affectionate and sympathetic friend. Did Johnnie hope to find such a friend in the new-comer?

Or since the rendering of service to others is so pleasant, especially when one is very young and the occasions for it are rare, perhaps Johnnie hoped to have the satisfaction of helping on the new apprentice, of encouraging him, of giving him a little useful knowledge. Having learned through his own experience and

his familiarity with the ways of the establishment, he would be able to guard his little comrade from many of the disagreeable things that had attended the first days of his own apprenticeship. He, this same Johnnie, might have remembered how his heart had swollen

within him on being thrown into his then strange surroundings, and how, notwithstanding the goodness of Mother Bonnet and the rough kindliness of the foreman, he had wept in secret, sometimes at a reproach, sometimes at injustice, sometimes at nothing, simply from homesickness, at being cut off from family ties.

Entrance upon an apprenticeship is a severe test to filial regard. The lad leaves one world for another. He ceases to be a child from the day the contract for the apprenticeship is signed. The trade that he is about to learn is to be his trade when he is a man. Thoughtless and vicious boys do not stop to think about these things. They are not conscious of the transformation through which they are passing. But on well-meaning, upright, and ambitious natures, the beginning of a career leaves the impress of a serene gravity of purpose. As Johnnie was more heedless than thoughtful, and fonder of pleasure than of the faithful fulfilment of his task, the change had but little affected his character; he asked for nothing better than to be a successful jeweller, for he had chosen that calling of his own free will. The glitter of the resplendent shops at night, by gas-light, had excited his enthusiasm. For hours at a time he would remain in contemplation of the sparkling ornaments so skilfully and artistically wrought. The golden bracelets, brooches, rings, and clasps threw him into a silent ecstasy; and in the intensity of his admiration he would say to himself, —

"When I get big I want to make jewellery like that; it's so beautiful!"

His parents yielded readily to his wish, pleased to think that he had found a vocation. After all, this trade is better than many another ; it is still an occupation which gives a good living to its followers. The apprenticeship is a little longer than in some other callings, but what of that? It is not asking too much to give a few extra months for the command of a lucrative employment. To have the means of a comfortable livelihood in one's hands is, to a child of the people, as good as a fortune.

They chose Mr. Dupont's establishment for several reasons — among others because the finest work was turned out there, and because the apprentices were honestly initiated into all the professional secrcts. Johnnie, from his inspection of the great jewellery salesrooms, had imagined that the workshops where such magnificent productions were made would be luxurious. His disillusion was great when he entered a gloomy, dirty, ill-lighted apartment, cluttered up with tools of all sorts, and occupied by a score of workmen, who were not in the least dressed after the manner of jewellers' clerks and the venders of fairy caskets, but were covered with long blouses of black cambric, very much soiled with wear and filings. No signs of jewels anywhere, except that on the benches, in little paste-

board boxes, were a lot of small, ugly objects that might be made of gold, but looked like copper, and did not shine at all — on the contrary were tarnished and coarsely finished.

"What!" thought Johnnie to himself, "can this be

a jewellery shop? Well, if it is, it's not a very pretty place."

That was his first serious disappointment. He concealed it in order that he might not be made fun of; for he felt that he had been childishly silly in believing that jewellers' workshops must be as brilliant and

grand as the salesrooms where the jewels were sold. The revelation, however, caused him a good deal of chagrin. It added to the trials of his new existence by destroying one of his cherished fancies. The first day of his apprenticeship seemed as long as the first day at school. They put him at a vice, and gave him a piece of metal to file. It was a monotonous, wearisome, disagreeable task. The handle of the file heated and scorched his hand. Several grievous blisters appeared. He stopped.

"Keep at it," said the workman charged with overlooking his efforts; "keep at it, youngster. Bear on — make it bite."

Johnnie timidly showed him the red marks left by the implement on his hand, and said, "It hurts."

The workman laughed, and tapped him on the cheek. "That's the trade getting into your fingers."

He had all he could do to keep back the tears. They came to the edge of his eyelids. He courageously frowned them down, but it was hard, very hard. His legs bent under him, his shoulders hurt dreadfully, his forearm felt weak and trembly, and the blisters swelled and swelled on his tender skin. Nothing is learned without effort; that is the price of victory. Mr. Dupont, accompanied by Mr. Griffin, came to see how he was getting on.

"That's our apprentice," said Mr. Dupont; "he's an intelligent-looking lad. He has courage and good will. What is he doing? He is filing. It's not very straight. He holds his tools awkwardly, but that will pass; it's only a question of time. Rest a little now, my lad; they will find something easier for you soon."

Johnnie, red as a poppy, with head bent down, said not a word, but to himself he thought, —

"If they'd only let me make an earring, there would be some fun in it; but to file away at a piece of copper, and copper harder than a dog — there's nothing amusing about that!"

He learned later on, did Johnnie, that one must learn to spell before one learns to read, to make pot-hooks before one can form letters, and to practise one's scales before one can sing, to file many, many pieces of copper "harder than a dog" before undertaking to make earrings.

For these reasons, and for others, the beginnings of his apprenticeship were painful. The former apprentice, who was still there, gave him not the slightest assistance. He was a selfish fellow, who saw in the arrival of a new learner only the means of getting rid of a great many disagreeable tasks. Johnnie realized this later on, and felt it keenly. And now, perhaps,

you think that he is rejoicing to-day at the prospect of another apprentice, in order that he may behave toward the novice in an entirely different manner.

Well, no; Johnnie was one of those who make it a principle — oh, these detestable principles! — to say to themselves that they can do to others what others have done to them, and who imagine that they escape from the effects of the wrongs that they have suffered by the aid of wrongs that they are able to inflict. If Mr. Dupont's apprentice was happy at the idea of no longer being alone, it was because he thought that in the position of elder he would have the whip-hand over the new arrival, and relinquish to him all the tedious tasks and monotonous services. He would reserve for himself what he found to be amusing and easy.

He had but one dread, and that was that the newcomer would also have the chance of running errands, which would be a serious blow to Johnnie's happiness; for of nothing was Johnnie so fond as running errands. One does not master a trade by executing commissions, loitering through the streets, or going up and down flights of stairs; but Johnnie never could see farther than the end of his nose. The momentary satisfaction of his desires was all that he cared for. To run errands was to serve his appren-

ticeship in the streets, it was to dawdle instead of working, it was to play marbles "for keeps," and amuse himself by looking at the pictures in the book-sellers' windows; it was to amble, to run, to have what he called "a good time;" — and it was to grow up incapable of being able to earn his living.

Would this other apprentice have the chance of running errands? Johnnie was afraid so.

IV.

JOHN.

One afternoon Mr. Griffin, the foreman, said to Johnnie, "You are going to have a comrade to-morrow."

The next morning at seven o'clock Mr. Griffin came into the workroom accompanied by a small lad, very neatly dressed, with an intelligent and shy expression, at once smiling and serious, — a small, dark-complexioned boy, with soft, fine hair, and open and thoughtful countenance, and with expressive, sympathetic eyes.

"Johnnie," said Mr. Griffin, "here is the little comrade I spoke to you about last night. You are his senior, and you can render him a great many services; treat him kindly."

Mr. Griffin looked at the new-comer, and tapped him on the cheek in sign of amity.

"For the rest, he appears to me like a good little chap, obedient and courageous. He wants to be an

honest man and an expert workman. We'll do our best for you here, my lad. Only pay attention to

what is said to you. You may go now. And see that you two get along well together; for if you do

not agree, if you are always squabbling, that will be very bad indeed." Mr. Griffin's voice was very serious, as it had been on the day when the sign had been posted up.

"Oh, we sha'n't squabble a bit, Mr. Griffin," responded Johnnie, who at first glance had discerned that the new-comer would be a docile companion.

"I hope it will be so," replied Mr. Griffin; "but the best way of making me believe so will be to prove it by your acts."

Now Johnnie, although somewhat mischievous and heedless, was at heart not ill-natured. His disposition was excellent; he was affectionate and sincere. All at once he felt himself attracted toward the new-comer; and he, who had been rejoicing over the idea of getting what he could out of the other fellow, underwent a change, and already began to seek for an occasion in which he might display his protecting friendship. He demanded bluntly, —

"What's your name?"

"John."

"John! Well, that's funny. My name's Johnnie. It's pretty nearly the same thing."

This coincidence in the two names had a good deal of influence in establishing friendly relations that first

day. By night the two were sworn allies. Johnnie knew John as well as if they had been brothers. He had asked and found out who John's father and mother were, what they did, whether or not he had brothers and sisters, where he had been to school, and why he had chosen this particular trade instead of another. And without any questions from John, he had told all that he knew about the different people in the Dupont establishment; about the workmen; about Mr. Griffin, who "grumbled a great deal, but wasn't so bad;" about Mother Bonnet, who slipped candy and apples in your pocket when you went to fetch water for her; and about customers who gave you little fees, and other customers who did not give you any.

The first day of his apprenticeship ended, John, disturbed by the sudden change in his existence, and with his brain in a whirl, tried to arrange his ideas, and to remember in an orderly way all that he had seen, heard, and surmised; but the task was hopeless. He fell asleep in his new bed with a feverish sense of perplexities that he could not define, and that made him neither sad nor cheerful, but serious, with the consciousness that a dividing line in his life had been reached, more important than any which he could thus far remember.

Johnnie was delighted with his new comrade. Their fourteen years went well together. John at first, because he was by nature not contrary, and then because he had not yet habituated himself fully to his new conditions, was very submissive to Johnnie, and the latter was greatly flattered by such condescension. He accepted every task without murmuring, not because he was simple, but because he was courageous. Several times Mr. Griffin was disposed to interfere.

"See here; it's Johnnie's place to do that."

"Yes, I know, Mr. Griffin," John would answer, to prevent Johnnie from getting a scolding; "but I wanted to do it, because I've nothing else to do."

It is the easiest thing in the world to get along with people who never go contrary to your wishes, and who defer to you in everything; and it looked as if companionship on these terms ought to continue indefinitely without a break. Yet in the course of a few months Johnnie suddenly showed toward John a covert hostility.

What had the new-comer done to fall from the good graces of his senior? Had he kicked when the other imposed too heavy tasks upon him? Far from it. To avoid reproaches, and to save Johnnie from blame, he never deferred to the morrow anything

that he could possibly get through with the same day.

Had he lost his ambition and courage? Not in the least. It had been found necessary to moderate his zeal, and insist that he should take suitable intervals of rest.

Had he taken from his comrade the privilege of running errands, and so deprived Johnnie of the delight of loitering in the streets, or along the docks when the dogs were having their baths? By no means. Why, then, had Johnnie turned against John?

Because he had yielded to the hateful vice of jealousy. Because, after three months of apprenticeship, John knew more than he who had been an apprentice for a year and a half. Because his comrade's good qualities were appreciated and had been the subject of praise. Every week Mr. Dupont was in the habit of giving money to the apprentices, and rewarding them according to their merits. It was not long before John, although new to the place, got more than Johnnie. The new-comer, in fact, seemed to justify their best

expectations. He was very skilful, and at certain kinds of work had the touch of an experienced artisan. Mr. Griffin was very fond of him, and let him know it whenever an occasion offered.

Whenever Johnnie made a blunder, tried to evade his duties, or by carelessness or want of tact failed in commissions with which he had been intrusted, John was always brought up as an example.

"Look at John; pattern yourself after him. See how he works, how he applies himself." At other times they would humiliate him. Mr. Griffin would say to John, "You will explain to Johnnie what he must do. Pay attention, and John will show you."

John did not like at all to be charged with such things; for he understood that his comrade was wounded by it, and that it might affect their friendship. In obeying the foreman's orders he sought to do so with the utmost tact, in order that he might not offend too seriously the vanity of his idle comrade. Yet, in spite of everything, Johnnie allowed his enmity to be aroused. He listened sullenly, with a distracted air, furious at being taught by an apprentice of whom he was the senior in service.

It made him angry to think that John should be esteemed more highly than he. The fact that the differ-

ence between them might be bridged over by his own exertions did not occur to him. He did not realize that he, Johnnie, could do as John did, — work hard, and pay attention to what was said to him. All that would be too difficult, and he thought it much simpler and more reasonable to say to himself that John should do as he did and pattern himself after Johnnie.

And if by chance his comrade made a mistake and was criticised, how happy that made Johnnie! His pleasure — a wicked pleasure it was — would light up his whole face. "Ah," he would think to himself, "Master Perfect can be just as stupid as other people, it seems." He thought he was inflicting a bitter punishment on his companion in designating him by the nickname of "Master Perfect." But John, when he heard himself called so, would always answer quietly, "I only wished I deserved the title, friend Johnnie!"

The exasperation which Johnnie felt went on increasing every day. He had chosen hatred for his companion — and the guilty thoughts that flitted through his mind! John was taken seriously ill; they feared that he might not live. The enmity of Johnnie was not disarmed by sight of the other's suffering. Envy is such a bad counsellor that he who was really

good at heart dared even to whisper to himself, "What if he should die!"

Fortunately John did not die. He regained his health, to the great joy of his employers, and particularly of Mother Bonnet, who did wonders in the way of inventing sovereign remedies and miraculous potions. When her "dear John" was on his feet again, she

would not consent that he should help her about the household tasks. Naturally, the choicest of her attentions fell to him, whether in the shape of cherries, or jam-tarts, or chocolate-creams. One day, when he had been presented with a pear almost as big as his head, — a golden, perfumed duchess, — he offered the finest portion to his comrade. Johnnie waved it back with a gloomy air, —

"I don't want it."

"That's silly. Why not? It's a good one, I can tell you. Take it, stupid."

"See here! Don't you call me stupid."

"That was only in fun."

"Fun or not, you don't call people stupid just for fun. It's an insult."

John, amiable as he was, could not refrain from saying, "Well, you're stupid enough now, anyway."

Johnnie raised his hand with a threatening gesture. "Say that again, and I'll cuff you!"

John, though surprised and indignant, kept cool. "You had best not touch me, but if you do you'll find out that I'm not a softy."

"We'll see about that. To-night after the workmen are gone, if you're not a softy — you" —

"If he isn't a softy, what will he do?" It was Mr. Griffin who spoke. Johnnie turned around, confused and abashed.

"Well," repeated Mr. Griffin, "if he isn't a softy, what will he do?"

John tried to smooth over matters. Mr. Griffin sent him away into another room, and had the matter out with Johnnie alone.

"He called me a stupid," said Johnnie in tears. "I'm his friend, and I don't want him to insult me."

"Stupid is sometimes said in a friendly way, as you very well know. But you are jealous. He is liked better than you, it is true. The secret of that is that he is better than you are. In everything he is stronger than you. You are priding yourself on your strength of muscle, but I feel certain that he could take care of ten such fellows as you. A do-nothing is a do-nothing at everything, even at a fight. However, we don't allow any fighting here. It would be a nice state of things to have apprentices fisting each other in the workshop! What sort of manners do you call that? If you ever touch so much as a hair of John's head you will have to reckon with

me, you rascal. Remember, now, what I have told you."

The battle did not take place. The severe admonition, in fact, had something of an effect upon Johnnie, who tried to be more amicably disposed toward John, and the latter received his advances most kindly. Johnnie, in fact, almost succeeded in reviving his old feeling of friendliness. By force of reasoning, he finally listened patiently to the praises bestowed upon his companion. In the detested rival he finally recognized an example to be followed. Little by little he submitted to the control of a superior character, until at length he positively admired one whom he had formerly hated. If he continued to call John "Master Perfect," it was no longer out of irony.

This conversion had a very happy effect. Admiring the qualities of his companion instead of envying them, he sought to make them his own. He showed less liking for loitering in the streets, and more fondness for the workshop; he was less careless, less awkward, more civil, and more obedient. His progress was so decided that it gave pleasure to others. They praised him openly.

"Well done; you're getting on. That's almost as well as John could do."

One day he and John were at work on a similar task, and when Johnnie had finished Mr. Griffin was loud in his commendations.

"Better and better. John himself has never done as well as that."

That night he was as fond of John as he had been on the first day of their acquaintance. His jealousy was all gone. He had found out the secret why the other was more popular than he, which was a great deal; but he had also found the courage to make that secret his own, which was more.

John and Johnnie were again warm friends and cordial companions at their tasks, when a third apprentice made his appearance.

V.

JACK.

THERE are certain things that people believe happen only in romance. The workshop already had a John and a Johnnie. The third apprentice was called Jack.

John, Johnnie, Jack — it seemed as if these three names had come together out of natural affinity. It was a coincidence due to a stroke of chance, and a very great stroke of chance it was!

John did not in the least resemble Johnnie, and Jack was not like either Johnnie or John. Each of the three apprentices was of a special type. John was thoughtful, serious, and courageous. Johnnie was frivolous, but frank; slothful by nature, but industrious by fits and starts; often doing wrong, but quick to repent, — a fine character, with some very serious blemishes.

Jack — if I say what I think of Jack, will people think that I am favoring him a little? I am not going to favor him at all, but I promise to give a

faithful history of the three apprentices of Moon Street.

Jack had attained his thirteenth year in plum-time; that is, in the month of August. He was short and twisted, like a vine plant, because he had got into the bad habit of holding himself onesidedly. His hair was red as a carrot, which is by no means an offence, and which in well-behaved children is even tolerable, but which ill became Jack; for one may have a fine head of hair, and it may be red, but

it is not necessary that it should be dishevelled. Jack very willingly deprived himself of the services of a comb, and consequently had a head like a porcupine.

It is not necessary to say anything about his nose, since that had nothing to do with his roguery, or of his little round, slightly squinting eyes, or of his rather large mouth, or of his ears, which were somewhat too long. Physical advantages are not of very great importance; and if Jack was not handsome, there was no reason why he should be blamed. And, by the way, have you ever noticed that there are no people who are wholly ugly? that there are only people who have faults? Ugliness of face never exists unless there is ugliness in the heart. If one is good and virtuous, those qualities are manifested in the countenance; and no cast of features can resist showing the effect of native ugliness, so that if this quality exists it can always be read there. He, on the other hand, who has been disgraced by nature and who is full of faults, will remain ugly; and more than that, his ugliness will increase through the faults of which it is the index.

Would Jack have had that wide-stretched mouth if he had not been a glutton? those shifty eyes if he had been sincere? those uncombed locks if he had

been neat? and, I may add, those long ears if he had been wise? But this last point has been for some time in doubt. Some very learned men have sought to make us believe that big ears do not prove anything, and by way of argument they have shown us their own.

When Jack presented himself at the workshop he had tried all sorts of trades. He had been helper to a mason, but by his awkwardness had emptied a hod of mortar on the head of a workman, who had expressed his discontent with that style of covering, and had roughly bade him be off. Turning house-painter, he had carelessly spilled lampblack into a pot of vermilion, and through misplaced greed had narrowly escaped poisoning himself by drinking spirits of turpentine. Then, one day he fell into a barrel of Prussian blue. He remained of

that color for more than a month; he had a fine complexion, something like that of a negro who had faded out a little.

As grocer's clerk he didn't seem to know the difference between a quart and a pound. Being abstracted in his thoughts, he dealt out pepper for candles, and molasses instead of coffee. One morning he waited upon two customers, one of whom asked for half a pound of powdered sugar, and the other for half a pound of table-salt. Two hours later both customers came back, furious with rage. The first had been eating salted cream, and the second taking sweetened soup. The unfortunate clerk had made a mistake; he had given sugar to the one who had asked for salt, and salt to the one who wanted sugar. These, however, were minor faults. A more serious matter was the rapid disappearance of the raisins, and they suspected him of having eaten them. Once they caught him with his hand in the drawer where the fancy biscuits were; he denied having eaten any, but tell-tale crumbs lingered about the corners of his mouth.

Preceded by the reputation thus acquired, Jack presented himself at Mr. Dupont's workshops. Mr. Griffin hesitated about taking him. He doubted the wisdom of introducing a wolf into his sheepfold. But he consid-

ered the situation of the poor lad, who was more to be pitied than blamed; and I'll tell you why.

Jack was an orphan. You who read this story, I hope will never know how much sorrow, bitterness, and suffering, are in that word. At the age when one needs so much to be loved, as a father and mother only can love, think what it is to go alone into life, a victim of all the evil instincts that are in us! Cruel, is it not? And those who are orphans, and who have not the strength to triumph over evil, but who succumb to it, — how much they deserve our pity!

Jack had an uncle who had given him shelter. The uncle was not a bad man; but he had one sad failing, — he drank. Being drunk most of the time, he took no care of the little boy, who grew up in his own way, with this lamentable example always before him. Instead of going to school, he ran the streets. At thirteen, the age when well-trained children are far advanced in their studies, he was ignorant of the elementary rules of spelling; he could not do a sum in three figures without making a mistake; and of history and geography he knew nothing. If you had told him that Louis XIV. was cousin-german to Pharamond, and that Pekin was a sub-prefecture in the department of the Seine-et-Oise, he would not have hesitated to believe you.

As to his handwriting, any fairly intelligent cat, who could be brought to apply himself to the task, would have been able to turn out a handsomer. You can see for yourself, right here, by comparing the signatures which John, Johnnie, and Jack have inscribed beneath their portraits. Whatever else may be said of the scrawl that Jack has made, you cannot justly declare that he has wielded what is known as a ready pen.

Without good advice or care of any sort, living mostly in the streets, and seeing at home only too often the lamentable spectacle of drunkenness, Jack, as you can readily understand, had never had the chance of growing up a little saint. If he had been good at all, he would only have been so by natural disposition; and that natural disposition is exactly what was lacking in him. The poor child had come into the world with a number of very bad inclinations; and these, education and family life had done nothing to repress.

Good Mr. Griffin understood all this. "Perhaps it's not too late to save him yet," he thought; "we'll try it, anyhow." It would be, indeed, a noble work to take the boy from his evil surroundings, and bring him under new influences, which would tend to develop in him the principles of uprightness, probity, and honor.

"Hello, carrot-top," said Johnnie, on first sight of him.

"Don't call him by that name again," said Mr. Griffin. "His hair is red, for the same reason that your hair is black. Only fools make fun of others on account of their looks. If Jack's hair was handsomer than yours, that would be no reason for showing jealousy" —

"Oh, handsomer! I like my own well enough."

"All the wiser you, my lad. If you wanted to change it, it's not in your power to do so. Give yourself no concern about looks. When any one comes searching for work, we don't ask what kind of hair he has, but whether he is a good workman. Look out that you keep your own locks well combed, and don't distress yourself about others. And now see that the new-comer has a cordial greeting." He called John. "My lad, here is a new comrade; be to him what you would wish him to be to you. His name is Jack."

"All right, Mr. Griffin," John responded, turning to the new-comer and taking him one side. "You have got into a good place," he said; "we are well fixed here."

Jack rubbed his hands together, snapped his fingers, puckered up his mouth, winked one eye, and executed a double shuffle, — a display of feeling which was in anything but good taste.

Johnnie was enormously entertained with the off-hand ways of the new arrival, and with his free and easy speech. He burst out laughing at every one of Jack's attempts at a joke, and admired him immensely, as if he had been a finished comedian.

"My," he said aside to John, "isn't he a droll chap! We sha'n't be dull when he's around."

"That's according to how you look at it," replied John.

Johnnie was indignant at seeing that his comrade did

not participate in his enthusiasm. "Oh, well, we can't all be Master Perfects like you."

Crash, smash, bang! At that moment a terrific racket aroused the whole workshop. A large pane of glass had fallen into the courtyard. Jack had been amusing himself by twirling a hammer, and with his usual dexterity had sent it through a window.

"That's a good beginning," said Mr. Griffin. "Keep on that way, and we shall get all the ventilation we want."

"I didn't do it on purpose," Jack whimpered.

"I can very well believe that. It would be rather too much to suppose that you had done it of your own free will."

This apprentice, who began by breaking windows, was destined to make a good deal of noise in the world.

VI.

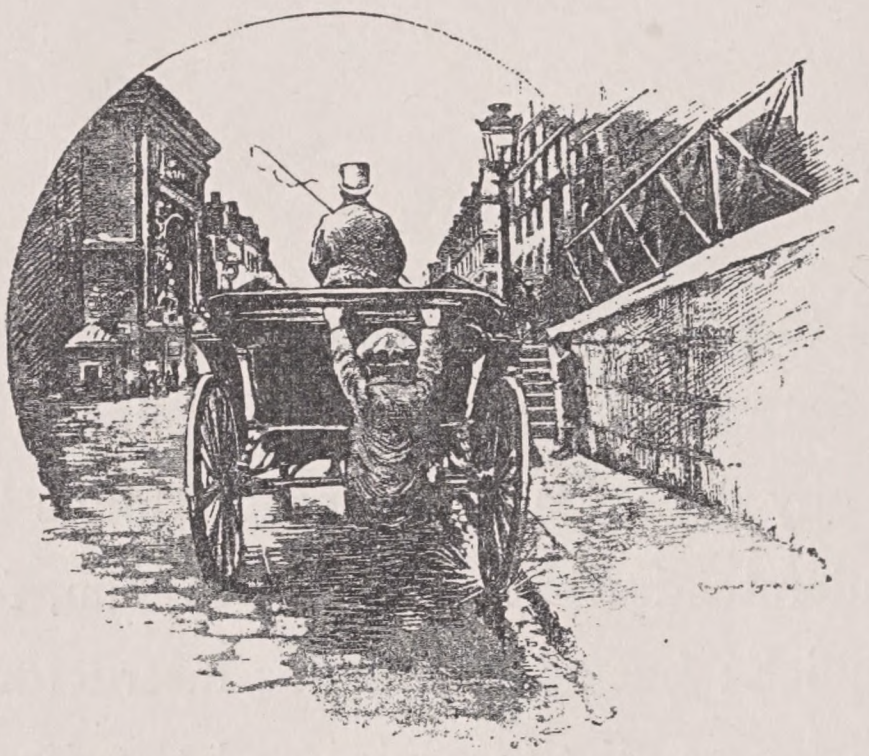
JACK PLAYS TRICKS.

JACK's arrival led to some disagreeable consequences. The lad had really no more desire to be a jeweller than he had had to be any one of a dozen other things he had tried. He understood what was said to him, for his mind was very quick; but as soon as his instructor's back was turned he forgot all the advice and the directions that had been given him. Steady work did not suit him at all. When he was obliged to stay in the shop and kept close at one occupation, the hours seemed to him as if they would never end.

Noon and luncheon time came far too slowly, and one o'clock, when work was resumed, always too soon. He wished that they had a clock on which the hands would travel with lightning speed during working-hours, and move slowly, — very, very, slowly, — during intervals of rest.

He was more fond than Johnnie of running errands. He invented errands, and he found excuses to go back

and forth as many times as possible when he was sent anywhere. He was continually on the go, and all over the quarter. You have met him more than once, most certainly.

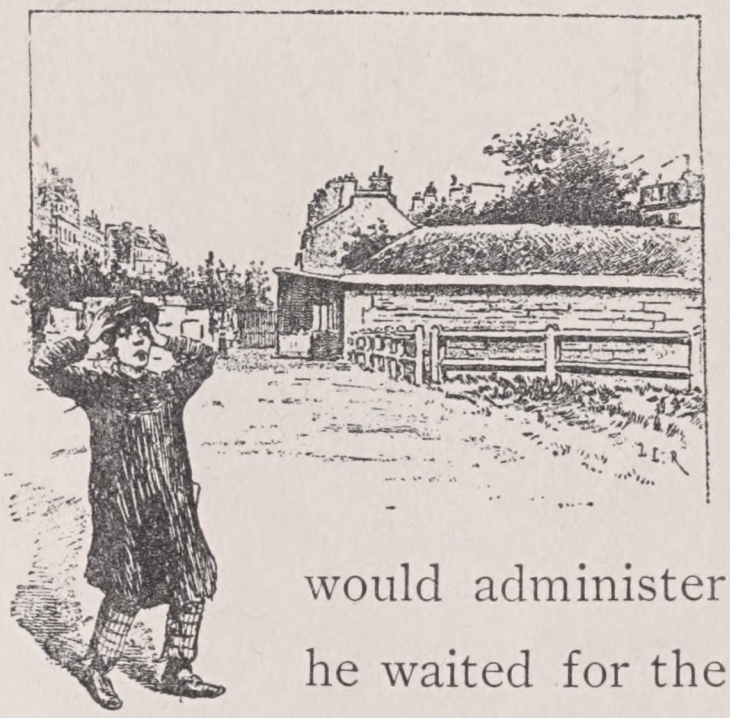


Now he would be quarrelling with little Arabs,

come from heaven knows where. Now he would stop to listen to the talk of travelling mountebanks. Now he would traverse Paris by cab, and for nothing. He had a way of hanging on behind carriages, and once in so doing got struck with a whip by a brutal coachman and narrowly missed losing one eye; another time he fell from his improvised seat, and

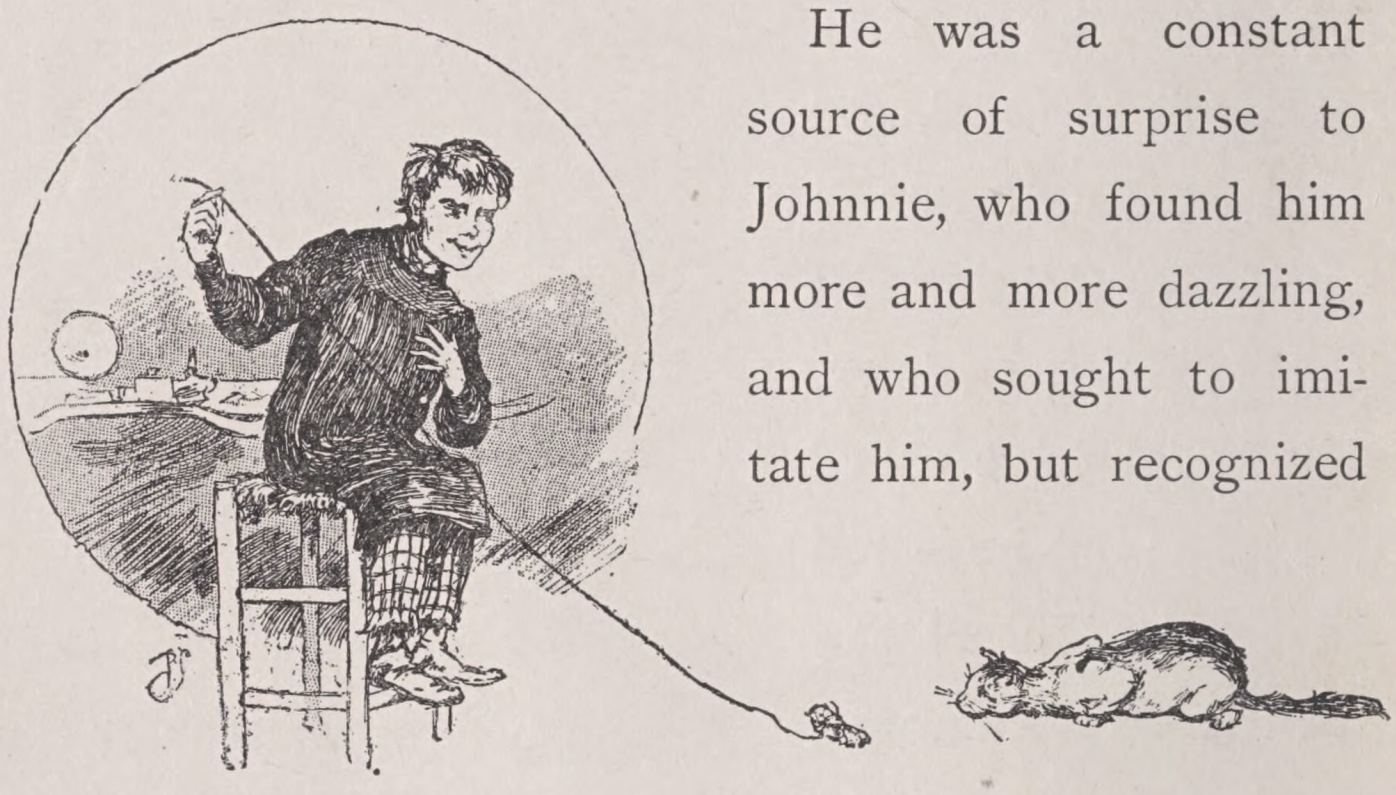
rolled in front of an omnibus. He was taken up in a pitiable state; no bones were broken, but he suffered greatly; and if it had not been for Mother Bonnet, who nursed him tenderly, he would not have got out of the affair as well as he did.

The lesson was wholly lost on him. No sooner was he out again, when he tried the same thing once more. This time he was not as adroit as usual, and his foot caught fast in such a way that he could not get down. He might have called for help; but he feared that the coachman would administer a little correction, and he waited for the carriage to stop. The carriage stopped, but after a drive of four hours outside of the city limits, in a region of which Jack knew nothing, and whence he came hobbling back on foot. The errand which he was to do should have taken him about twenty minutes. He was away for six hours. When he got back, he was punished.



From these excursions he brought many anecdotes which he retailed to the workshop. Very imitative by

nature, he remembered readily all the slang and rough language of the street. There is a difference between the speeches thus picked up and the teachings of the master of etiquette. Jack was far from thinking that he had attained perfection in this kind of discourse, but he spared no effort to make himself an accomplished buffoon.



He was a constant source of surprise to Johnnie, who found him more and more dazzling, and who sought to imitate him, but recognized his inferiority. Jack knew everything, — except what he ought to have known.

If an absurd or ridiculous song came out, Jack would buy it, learn it by heart, and sing it in the most outlandish falsetto that ever inflicted torture upon the human ear.

Jack had made friends with La Moune, who had the freedom of the workshop. He invented games which

were her delight. He would make mice out of scraps of paper and a piece of thread, and she would chase them in graceful leaps and bounds. But he did not stop there; he undertook to make experiments with La Moune, and she objected. One day he said to his comrades: "I'm going to show you to-night in the dark an experiment that you will find very amusing. I bet that I can bring sparks of fire out of La Moune."

"Rats!" responded Johnnie, in a provoking way, but curious enough to see.

"You'll stroke her back with your hand," said John.

"You know about that?" said Jack, astonished that the other should be aware of this secret.

"Yes," said John; "but I have never seen the operation, and I never had the wish to try it."

That night they got together by appointment. La Moune had been deceitfully entrapped in the dormitory. Jack called her, patted her, passed his hand over her back. La Moune purred. All at once, Jack called out in the darkness:—

"Attention!"

The two others looked with all their eyes. They waited to see the sparks.

"Moune! Moune!" cried Jack; "will you keep still?"

"Pfft! Pfft!" said the cat.

"There, you'll see the sparks now!" exclaimed Johnnie.

Not sparks, but claws. Jack was badly scratched. His hand was bleeding. La Moune has avenged herself for being subjected to such experiments.

"As an experiment in electricity," said John, "it is not so bad; but all the same I rather prefer the demonstrations they give at night-school. The apparatus they use is safer to handle. More than that, I've heard it said that things always go by contraries, and when you rub a cat's back the wrong way, you're apt to get more scratches than sparks."

Jack, the resourceful, knew also how to do tricks with cards, and how to whistle by putting his fingers in his mouth. Johnnie tried in vain to acquire this villanous accomplishment; it was quite beyond him. As for John, he said: "Whistling like that is not good manners. I'm not a locomotive."

Jack was quite vain of these different displays of talent. Vanity is a very queer thing!

"Oh, well, you know," he would say, "it's very hard to do."

It was not so hard as to make a fine piece of

jewellery, and it was infinitely less useful, — that is what Jack might have added, but did not.

As a mountebank he would have been a success. He had not his superior in turning a hand-spring. He could balance himself on chairs. He could have given points to a circus clown.

To be a jack-pudding, — there's an ambition for you! He had never been able to learn to speak good French; but he had picked up, with the greatest ease, the phrases and the accent of the harlequin and the merry-andrew. If Jack had been sent to the Institute he would never have come back; not that he would have entered the Academy, but he had discovered in that neighborhood a single stick-player of marvellous ability, — one Camus by name.

Camus juggled with canes, and caught a walnut, thrown high in the air, in a hollow stick. Naturally he always had a crowd of idlers about him, — street

urchins in the first row, and among these often Jack. He would draw a circle on the pavement with a piece of chalk.

"Look out, now, and don't step over the edge of the gallery," he would say; "you little good-for-nothings."

The gallery was the chalk line. He would make some flourishes to attract the attention of the public, and when his audience was sufficiently large —

"Now, then!" he would exclaim. "I get along with one stick because there are not two. To do this trick, one must have fingers; it's a great help.

'When three canes a-walking go,
The first's in front, as you must know;
The first is never in the rear;
The last will not in front appear.
When three canes a-walking go,
The first's in front, as you must know.'"

He went through some tricks, then spoke again: —

"Before continuing the other exercises I shall make the grand tour. I shall make the tour of the world, — the tour of the world as far as I can reach it, you understand, — so here goes for a start!" He addressed himself to Jack, who wore an idiotic grin. "You haven't a sou about you, you ill-starred jeweller?

Ladies and gentlemen, here is the plate; it only needs a hundred francs. One sou already, — we are getting on. We only need now ninety-nine francs and ninety-nine centimes. Come, pony up! Only one sou, — well, I put that on the end of my nose. The purse opens — presto, gone! Don't get dis couraged. I'll give you the whole business for twenty sous. Now we only lack five — only four. Look out, or you'll get in too many. Now we'll do the walnut game." He cracked one. "You see what it is. You can eat it, little girl, — it's good. Well, I take a walnut, just like this, I throw it fifty feet above the house-tops, this way" —

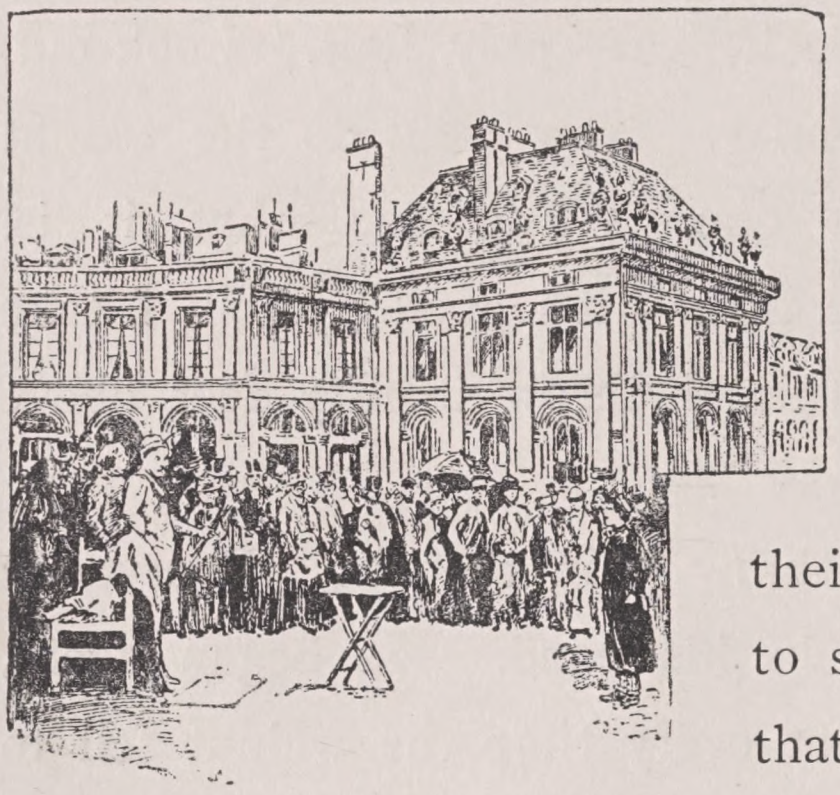
He made as if to throw it in the air. Everybody looked. He kept it in his hand. He began again, seriously this time, but every time the walnut fell to the ground.

"I slipped up that time, 'tis true, ladies and gentlemen; but it is human to err, and we learn by experience."

With the sticks he succeeded better. Jack was trying to master the same tricks, and that is why on the first day at the workshop he let fly a hammer through the window. Another time he discovered a merchant who dealt in magic powder, — a strange

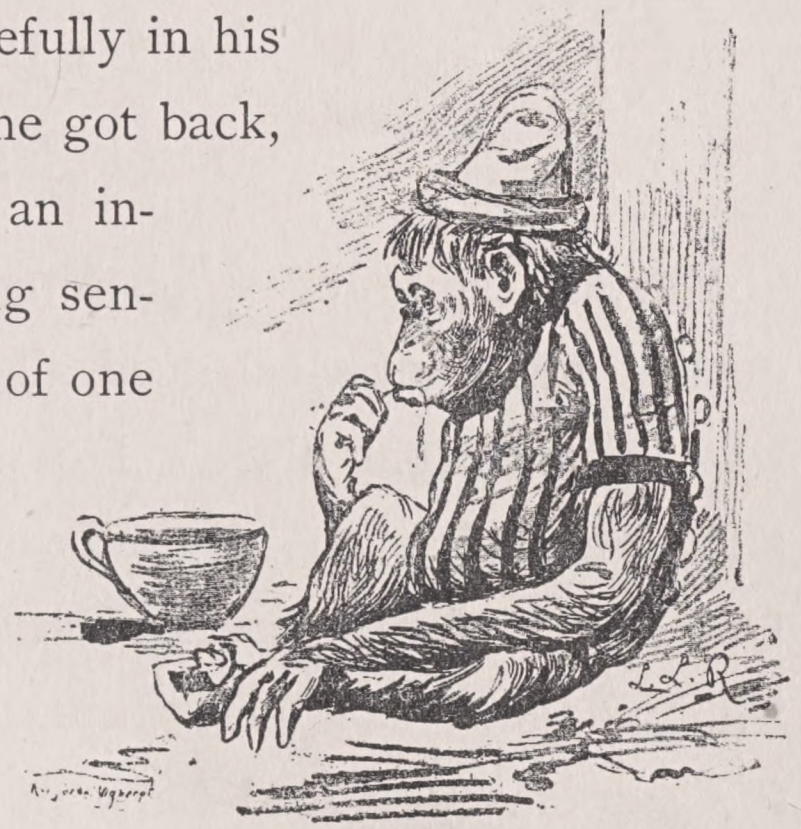
looking personage, who wore a tattered red coat adorned with tarnished gilt braid.

"If you want to have some fun," said this odd fellow, "buy a box of this powder. The recipe came down to me from my ancestors. It's the biggest joke out. When you go into society, you can bet a bottle of wine with a prince of the blood or a duchess that they can't snuff a candle with their bare fingers; but if they complain that their guests are all going to sleep, you can wager that you have the means of making everybody brace up. You then bet forty sous, which you have previously deposited with the Bank of France, and you then reveal the secret of this powder. Gentlemen and ladies, it will scratch, and it will bite. Two sous a packet!"



Jack had two sous, and he used them to buy a packet of this wonderful powder from the monkey pedler. With the substance thus secured he pro-

posed to play some scurvy tricks. He would drop a little down John's and Johnnie's necks, and — for the rascal had no respect for age — put a little in good Mother Bonnet's cap. He slipped the small package carefully in his pocket. Scarcely had he got back, when he began to feel an intensely painful, burning sensation down the length of one leg. "It scratches and it bites." It bit him. He thrust his hand in his pocket, — no magic powder there. It had all run out, and the packet was empty. Jack's pockets always had holes in them, and the powder had taken advantage of the opportunity to run down his leg. Destiny had once more ordained that the biter should be bit.



VII.

BISQUINE.

YET, in spite of everything, Jack had one good quality which over-balanced all his faults. His heart was in the right place. He was capable of sincere affection and even of self-sacrifice and generosity. One corner of his perverse nature was free from blemish, and there pity for suffering had at certain periods the supremacy. And here is the way in which the existence of this feeling, so carefully concealed and so little anticipated, came to light.

It was noticed that at night, when the workmen were gone and his comrades were out of the way, Jack was in the habit of going to a store-room which opened off the workshop. Every night, for two weeks, with the utmost mystery, he made this errand, always with something carefully concealed in his blouse. Evidently he was up to something. Mr. Griffin, who saw everything, took note of Jack's behavior. He resolved to keep a watch on the apprentice.

"What mischief is he at now?" said the foreman to himself. "I must look into this."

Although it was dark in the place where Jack went, he never carried any light, and it was impossible to follow his movements. Waiting until he came out, Mr. Griffin one night explored the premises. He searched very carefully every nook and corner, and found nothing out of the way.

"Yet I'm sure he takes something in there. He must have a secret hiding-place." What was the mystery? The other apprentices were not in his confidence.

"I thought I heard something moving in the store-room yesterday," said John.

"And I heard a sort of moaning sound," added Johnnie; "it scared me."

Jack turned red, and responded briskly, "Oh, yes; I heard it too; and I saw what it was, — it was rats."

"Rats, was it? You are certain of that?" demanded Mr. Griffin, fixing his glance in a disquieting way upon the last speaker.

Jack was uneasy and looked down. "Yes, Mr. Griffin," he stammered; "it was rats; I'm very sure I saw them."

"Ah, you're not quite sure, it seems. A moment ago you declared that you had seen them."

Saturday came, the day when everything was put in order about the workshop. The whole place was tidied up, and every corner swept clean. This task usually fell upon Johnnie and John, as Jack was almost always away on an errand. And this time what do you suppose John found? — Horrors! a bloody handkerchief!

The two apprentices looked at each other in amazement. A bloody handkerchief! — they could not conceal such a discovery as that. They went and showed it to the foreman, who was greatly moved, and said, —

"Very good. I will question Jack."

When Jack came back, they showed him the handkerchief. He turned frightfully pale.

"Yes," said he, trembling; "it's mine."

"How came that blood on it?"

The lad glanced instinctively toward the store-room as if he expected an accusing voice to come from there.

"How came that handkerchief to be bloody?" repeated Mr. Griffin.

"I don't know," responded Jack.

"You are lying to me."

"Well, the fact is, I cut my finger."

"Show me your finger. Where is the cut?"

"No, I didn't cut me," replied Jack; "I had the nose-bleed."

"Another falsehood. Why do you lie to me, Jack?" Mr. Griffin's deep voice was very severe.

John and Johnnie drew near each other in alarm. The bloody handkerchief, Mr. Griffin's icy tones, the embarrassed attitude of their comrade, his pallor, the noises they had heard in the store-room, the groans, —

"Goodness!" they thought; "can it be possible?"

They read the newspapers sometimes, and the criminal reports had made an impression upon them.

"Why do you go so often and at night to the store-room?" asked Mr. Griffin dryly.

"Oh, how can you ask such a thing? Why, I never go there at all!"

"I have seen you. I have followed you there. It is useless to try to deceive me. What do you go there for?"

"Not for anything; I don't go there for anything — for nothing" —

"Well, we'll see. With your comrades here as witnesses I'm going to make a thorough examination. You have concealed something there. Are you going to confess?"

It was useless to hold out any longer ; but only when Mr. Griffin got to the store-room door did Jack venture to speak.

"Mr. Griffin, Mr. Griffin ; I'll tell you the truth ; but promise me not to hurt him or drive him away."

"Drive who away ? "

"My dog."

"What dog ? "

"I'll show you."

He disappeared in the store-room and then came back, bearing in a softly cushioned basket a handsome, black, curly dog with a bandaged paw.

"This is who I went to see and to carry things to eat, if you want to know."

"Why did you hide him in there ? "

"Because you forbade us to have dogs around."

"If I forbade it, why do you have one ? "

"Because he was wounded and unhappy. I couldn't help taking pity on him. I've been caring for him now for a fortnight."

He put the basket on the floor. The wounded animal got up and dragged himself to the feet of his little master, wagging his tail as an indication of gratitude. Johnnie and John stooped over and petted him, —

"Too bad about his paw!"

Mother Bonnet came up, and, of course, took a sympathetic interest in the invalid.

Jack then related the history of the way in which

he had found the dog. As it is always easy to tell the truth, he spoke very simply and almost eloquently, and his hearers were touched by the story.

It was this way. Jack was flattening his nose against the shop windows, as was his habit, and so did not at first perceive a stray dog that had taken

advantage of a tub of olive-oil, which a grocer had drawn from a leaking cask and placed on the side-

walk, to supply itself with a breakfast. The grocer came out in great wrath.

"Whose dog is drinking my oil?"

"Mine," said Jack, never at a loss in such emergencies.

"Your dog has drunk at least a quart of oil" (this was not true); "you must pay me for it. It will be fifteen sous."

"I haven't any money," said Jack, always up to his tricks; "but if you want to get back what you have lost, you can do so easily. Go and get a lamp-wick and give it to the dog. Let him swallow part of it and keep one end out. As the dog is full of oil, he'll make a first-class lamp. You can light him, and everybody will come to see him burn. Your fortune will be made. Here you are; the new and wonderful dog-lamp, self-regulating, all the latest improvements!"

"Ah, you are making game of me," said the grocer. "I'll fix you; here's for your mangy dog!"

Saying this, he dealt the poor beast a kick with his hoof and wounded the dog's foot, — I should say, of course, a kick with his foot that wounded the dog's paw. The poor animal howled dismally. A crowd gathered and condemned the brutality, for the grocer was clearly in the wrong. The dog would not have drunk his oil if he had not been so careless as to put the oil in the dog's way. It turned out that his wicked deed lost him considerable custom, an argument which had much more effect upon him

than remonstrances from kind-hearted people. Jack gave him a lesson in humanity. He bound up the wounded paw with his handkerchief, and carried the suffering animal away in his arms.

But Mr. Griffin did not like dogs around the work-shop. Still, Jack felt that he could not abandon the animal in the condition in which it then was. He brought it home secretly, and kept it the first night in his own bed. The next morning he found a place in the store-room and took care of it there, giving it food and drink. All he wanted was to see the animal well again.

"That's all I ask, Mr. Griffin; only let me cure him! When he is well again, poor dog, I will do whatever you say with him."

"When he gets well, you can keep him. I don't want to be the means of separating you from a faithful friend; for if you cannot always be sure of gratitude from human beings, you can at least be sure of it from dogs."

Mother Bonnet brought a dish of food. "There,"

she said to the dog, "eat that; but, you thief, keep away from the oil!"

As the dog was of the feminine sex they called her Bisquine. Friendship was a matter of time between Bisquine and La Moune. Dogs and cats do not take to each other by instinct; in fact, they are rather disposed to wage war upon each other. Only earthenware dogs can look at each other as fiercely as cats look at real dogs, but the earthenware dogs do not fight.

La Moune was slumbering comfortably in a hat-box, which she had honored with the distinction of taking for her bed, when the patter of two pairs of strange paws struck upon her alert ear. She opened one eye and then the other, glanced slowly around, lifted her head, stretched out her neck, pricked up her ears, got on her feet, and with infinite precau-

tion followed in the track of the new-comer, whose free and easy ways were not at all pleasing. She watched as Bisquine ran about the room which was her particular domain, and made it clear that she considered this invasion to be in very bad taste.

The dog ran barking from one to another, lapping at everybody and rubbing up against Mr. Griffin's legs. She passed near La Moune, who let fly a tremendous imprecation, and arched up her back like a cathedral roof, and waved the menacing banner of her distended tail in signal of war.

With the idea of paying her respects, Bisquine brought her nose close to La Moune's. La Moune, with a ready paw and distended nails, gave her two or three lively digs. Bisquine uttered a loud yelp of pain.

"Ah, well," said Mother Bonnet, "if they're going to fight at this rate"—

She took up the cat and petted her, that La Moune might understand that there was one friend still remaining, and that gentleness was better than severity. But La Moune was obdurate. She sulked. She retired under a chest of drawers, and thence observed the movements of the dog with an evident desire to fly at Bisquine's head at the slightest provocation.

That night, without the slightest ceremony, Bisquine devoured La Moune's supper, — an action which you may suppose did not tend toward peaceful relations. The warfare of those first days was cruel; and if Bisquine did not lose an eye in the terrific battles that took place, it was only by a narrow chance that she escaped.

As time went on the battles became less frequent; they got so that they ate amicably from the same saucer, slept side by side, and frolicked together. In fact, they were often in company, sought each other out, evidently thought highly each of the other, and finally became almost inseparable. Bisquine moped if La Moune was long away, and La Moune could not reconcile herself to separation from Bisquine. In the brains of these two small creatures love had taken the place of hate, and it was as if they said to themselves: "Is it possible that we would have quarrelled so if we could have understood each other as well as we do now?"

It often happens in life that cats and dogs hate each without reason. "To understand is to love." Try to realize this, and apply it to yourself. That is the secret of happiness.

VIII.

THE BROKEN BOUGH.

JOHN went to night-school, by special permission from Mr. Dupont. The night-school is an excellent thing. It has been organized especially for the education of young artisans, who must get their scholarship as best they can, and at the night-schools are instructed by devoted and interested teachers. John went six evenings in a week. He stood among the first in his various classes; and his teachers were very fond of him on account of his intelligence, his good conduct, and his industry.

"If you succeed in winning three first prizes," Mr. Griffin had said, "you may have anything from me that you will ask for, since I know you will ask for nothing that will not be reasonable. Work on, then."

Johnnie and Jack informed Mr. Griffin of their desire to go to the night-school, — that is to say, to get permission to stay out till ten o'clock. Mr. Griffin granted their request, but only after warning them that he

should keep himself informed as to their movements, and know what use they made of their liberty.

They went to their classes with great regularity for three days. To Jack, the novelty of the thing was very entertaining. He got no special good from the lessons, for he was too much taken up with what was going on about him; nevertheless, he declared his purpose not to miss a single session. Like a certain place we have all heard of, Jack was very well supplied with good intentions.

The classes were dismissed at ten o'clock. One night an incident occurred that to John was a matter of considerable significance. While they had been at their studies a great snow-storm swept over the city, and covered everything with a thick, fleecy coat of crystal flakes. Carriages and people largely disappeared from the streets, and young scapegraces took advantage of the occasion to bombard everybody who was out with snow-balls.

In the square, before the building where the classes met, John saw several women pedlers with handcarts in a great deal of trouble. One of the carts was carefully covered; but by looking closely one could see that it was loaded with magnificent oranges, which seemed to exhale a delicious perfume on the frosty air. The

proprietor of this itinerant garden of the Hesperides was trying to push the vehicle onward, but the snow was so deep she could not move it. John — those oranges were so tempting! — offered to help her. The offer was made in a most disinterested way, such as

might be expected from a good little boy who was kind-hearted and could not pass any one in trouble without holding forth a helping hand.

Slipping, puffing, and perspiring, the orange-woman and the apprentice harnessed themselves to the cart and shoved it along with a "Heave, yo, ho!" and the

large snow-flakes settled slowly on their faces, and melting, ran in little rivulets down their necks. In this manner they finally reached a distant alley, reserved especially for this kind of vehicle, and which

that night was nearly empty, the usual occupants not having yet arrived.

His task accomplished, John was about to withdraw, and took his leave with great politeness. The woman called him back, and in acknowledgment of his kind-

ness, offered him what he had expected,— oranges. He made the celebrated gesture with which Hippocrates refused the presents of Artaxerxes; but his self-denial did not last. The woman filled his pockets; and he yielded readily to this act of violence, with a confused "Thank you" as each golden ball found a lodging on his person. He went homeward, with his blouse swollen to astonishing proportions, and weighted down with the booty that his diplomacy, under the cover of beneficence, had enabled him to secure.

Very often, when he became a man, he thought of that orange-woman; and he came to realize that disinterested actions often proceed from very remote motives, and he understood how it was that a spirit of fraternity might sometimes be inspired by love for one's own good. He had meanwhile met with many flattering testimonials of friendship, and often in such cases had found reason to suspect that those who offered them were not so unselfish as they tried to appear. We have all been there. Like John, we may regard with a suspicious eye those who press upon us unexpected services; and we may be pardoned, if in moments of scepticism we occasionally say to ourselves, "Perhaps they have seen the oranges!"

But we must not forget that all apparently generous

actions do not rise from interested motives, and that there are some noble natures who give simply for the sake of giving, and without hope of reward.

The three apprentices continued to frequent the night school. One evening, as the teacher was going through a demonstration at the blackboard, a strange noise was heard, similar to that made by a stove-funnel when the draught is pretty strong. It was Jack, snoring. The teacher paused, and urged the delinquent not to discommode himself in the least, and begged him next time to bring a mattress with him. Shamed by this rebuke, Jack would never again attend the classes, notwithstanding the persuasions of Johnnie, and more especially of John. The next night he went with his two comrades as far as the door, but there left them, saying, "While I'm waiting for you, I'll take a little turn." The following night it was the same thing, but with a variation.

"I tell you, I had fun last night. I went on the stage. It's a funny place, the theatre, — and to think of being an actor!"

Johnnie, at this revelation, opened his eyes very wide. He was crazy after the theatre, because it fed his passion for what was hidden and mysterious. He began by pretending not to believe what Jack said, in order

that the latter might be led on to tell him all about it.

"Nonsense; you haven't been on the stage. You're too small."

"But I tell you I have."

"Well, what part did you take?"

"I do the broken bough. That's right. There's a battle; and I'm a tree in the distance. I hold out my arm like that; that's the branch of the tree. The battle begins; 'boom — rat-a-pat-pat — boom — boom — boom!' My arm falls down to my side and works part of the scenery. The broken bough falls. See?"

"Oh, how funny!" responded Johnnie dreamily. "That gives you a chance."

"And then, you know, I get ten sous for that, every night. Don't you want to try it?"

"And the night school?"

"Play hookey, you simpleton!"

"But what will Mr. Griffin say?"

"He won't know it."

"John will tell him."

"Johnnie, you are wrong to say that," John interrupted; "you know very well that I don't tell tales. But you can be sure of one thing, and that is that you are doing wrong. To go on the stage! In my opin-

ion it would be a great deal better to attend your classes."

"It's easy to see," replied Jack, "that you don't know what a fine thing it is to play in comedy."

"Do you think," Johnnie inquired anxiously, "that there would be a part for me?"

"Ah, well, as to that I can't say," replied Jack vainly (a queer thing, vanity!); "there's only one broken bough in that piece, and I'm the one that does it. But you can come, all the same, and look on."

"Don't go," urged John; "it will make Mr. Griffin angry."

"Only for once," said Johnnie; "there can't be any great harm in that."

Perfection does not exist in this world. Everybody has his moments of weakness. The prophets tell us that even the best of us sin at least seven times a day. John was a good boy; but he sometimes did wrong, for all that. It is also well to bear in mind that the influence of evil is contagious. For instance, Jack's tricks, unpardonable as they were, sometimes forced the most serious to laugh.

At first John had kept away from this comrade in apprenticeship, whose character so little resembled his own. He didn't like his style. He condemned

his uncouth expressions, his flippant tone, and his mischievous suggestions. By and by he got more tolerant, and finally was amused by behavior that at first had offended him. Jack's grimaces were extremely diverting. John had not got so far as to imitate the bad manners of the other, but he no longer kept aloof from him.

One morning he surprised Jack smoking! — yes, smoking! — smoking a pipe that belonged to one of the workmen, — a black, reeking, ill-smelling pipe!

"That's a nasty trick you're up to, Jack," is what John ought to have said; what he really said was: "Oh, Jack, if anybody saw you!"

"No one will see me, stupid," said Jack. "It's great fun. Try it."

"No," replied John with disgust. "I don't want to smoke."

"Ah, well, you need a stomach for it; that's true."

And Jack smoked — smoked for somebody else to see. He said that he enjoyed it, and he felt that it was an enviable accomplishment, — that it made him "a man;" but, as a matter of fact, he thought it detestable. It irritated his throat; it made him spit —

Nevertheless, John, for fear of appearing ridiculous,

— of course, one is never ridiculous when one does anything wrong! — consented to take a whiff; just one whiff. It made him sick. The smoke filled his throat and his nose so that he coughed; and then he

swallowed some, and that made him feel very badly at his stomach, so that he — well, never mind.

"I'd just like to know," said John, when he had recovered, "what fun there is in a pipe?"

Now, if I were to be allowed to drop a word into

John's ear, I should say to him something like this: "Smoking is like other bad habits. It is distasteful at first, and we don't like it in the least; but we persevere, saying to ourselves, 'Why shouldn't I do it? Everybody else does.' We force ourselves to it. We strive as hard as possible to overcome our repugnance. By and by we get used to it, and the habit is formed. Bad habits are like eye-teeth, — they come of themselves when they once get started; and when they have at length pushed through, it is a very, very painful process to pull them out."

Without giving up his classes, John thought, not without envy, of the departure every night of Jack and Johnnie for the theatre, where they posed as "members of the company." John was very fond of the theatre. He was especially fond of plays that make people cry, and, above all, of military dramas, like that, for instance, in which the French enter Milan under an arch of tri-colored flags.

Seated with his parents in a remote part of the house, he had feasted upon the spectacle of a stage crowded with soldiers and adorned with gorgeous scenery. He was crazy to go behind the foot-lights, and to know how it was all done.

"Well, then, why don't you come?" said Jack.

"You can see the whole business. Oh, it's immense! Palaces built of card-board, and zinc trees!"

The night school had come to an end a week sooner than was usual. The pupils had been examined, and the announcement of the prizes had been made. John knew that he was to have three firsts, so he had the right to ask Mr. Griffin for anything that he wanted. What should it be? It was very perplexing. He wanted so many things!

He would have told the foreman that the classes were at an end, if through Jack's rascally influence he had not conceived the idea of going on the stage. Letting Mr. Griffin believe that the night school was still in session, he started out one evening, very uneasy in mind, with his two comrades.

They went to the Ambigu. Introduced to the stage manager by Jack, who still played his famous *rôle* of the broken bough, John was given permission to appear in a scene which ended about ten o'clock. He went up to dress, mingling with a crowd of young people, who as a rule were neither well-behaved nor honest, who spoke the most voluble slang, and who were not at all neat in their appearance. But the novelty of the occasion prevented him from dwelling on these details. Like Johnnie, he was dressed as a drummer-

boy. The scene ended. After he had filed off the stage, abashed at the sight of so many staring eyes, he went up again to put on his own clothes, — but his clothes were not there! They had been stolen; and so had Johnnie's. How were they to get back?

"You're right enough," said the stage manager. "A drummer-boy's costume ought to satisfy you."

"But it's this way, sir," said John; "the boss will know, seeing us in this costume, that we've been on the stage."

"Well, what of that? He ought to be pleased with the honor!"

"He'll punish us."

"Why?"

"Because he doesn't want us to go on the stage."

"If he doesn't want you to go on the stage, what do you do it for?"

The man turned on his heels, for he had no time to carry on discussions with youngsters; moreover, he had a droll, mocking, ironical air. There must surely be some mystery behind all this.

At this moment Jack rejoined his mournful comrades. Tearfully they told him of the evil that had come upon them. Jack had not been obliged to change his clothes, as his part demanded no special costume.

"You can fix it well enough," said Jack. "Just borrow these, and wear 'em home; and when you get there, take 'em off."

"But what shall we put on in the morning? These are all the clothes we have."

"You can hide these, and say that you can't find your own, — that a thief must have got into your room and carried 'em off. Nothing slow about that."

They decided to put this clumsy scheme into operation. You can imagine that the two youthful actors were not particularly proud of themselves when they

entered the workshop. They did not bear much resemblance to the French occupying Milan. For victorious soldiers, they were not very frisky. They stole in quietly. Had anybody seen them? They signalled to one another, and quickly got to bed.

"I think," said John, "that it would be much better to tell the truth, — it always is."

"Well, I'm not going to," said Johnnie; "and we must both say the same thing."

Jack was hugely amused at the turn affairs had taken. He had nothing to fear, since he had not lost his clothes. They passed in front of Mr. Griffin's door. It was closed, as usual. They breathed again; they were saved, or very near it. They called to one another softly. At that instant the door

opened, and Mr. Griffin appeared, with a light in his hand.

"What's all this nonsense about?" he said. "Why are you two dressed in those costumes? Is it carnival time, that you go about in that guise? Where have you been?"

"At school," said Johnnie.

"Is that true, John?" asked Mr. Griffin.

"Yes," said John faintly.

"Do you mean to say that they rig you out that way at school?" He took them both by the ear. "You are lying."

"You see, sir, I'm not a soldier like them," said Jack, pointing to his clothes.

"No; but in spite of that you are the most guilty of the three," said the foreman. "It is useless to try to deceive me. I know what is going on; I always do. There was no school to-night. So you, John, followed Johnnie and Jack, who, instead of attending their classes have been finding occupation at the theatre. It was Jack who discovered this mischievous mode of passing the time. To-night, when you went to change your clothes, you found that your own had disappeared. That is why you are here now in this attire. Am I right?"

"Yes, sir," said John sobbing, and astounded at being found out.

"We'll never do so any more," whined Johnnie.

Jack said nothing, but braved the storm, insensible alike to punishment and reproaches.

"It is almost eleven o'clock," said Mr. Griffin; "it is too late to consider the matter further to-night. I shall have more to say about it to-morrow. You can go to bed now."

They went to bed. How dismayed Johnnie was; and how sad was John! He cried till his pillow was soaked with his tears; his sobs echoed through the darkness. When dawn came he was still crying, but fatigue finally overcame him and at last he slept, — an agitated, feverish, restless sleep, with momentary convulsive awakenings and terrifying dreams. Oh, the theatre, the victorious French, the battle of the broken bough!

In the morning at the usual hour he awoke. He expected to see the stage costume which he had taken off the night before; but in its place, arranged upon the chair, he saw his own clothes, the ones that had been stolen from him.

"What's this? exclaimed Johnnie at that moment. "Our clothes have come back. I don't understand it."

They did their best to solve the mystery, but it was too much for them. They were summoned to appear before Mr. Griffin. He noticed that John's face was downcast, and that his eyes were red; that Johnnie simply looked sheepish; and that Jack was grinning.

"John," said Mr. Griffin, "you have been led away by your companions; and this is the first time. You have been punished enough, for you were crying all night. Johnnie, you have followed Jack more than once. You have played truant, and have tried to deceive me.

I shall reserve a more serious punishment for you. As to you, Jack, you have been the cause of the whole trouble. You have induced the other two to do what was wrong. You are the corrupt influence that has infected good intentions. Saturday you must leave."

At this blow, Jack stopped grinning. "Where am I

to go?" he whimpered. "I have no father or mother, and my uncle won't have anything more to do with me!"

John was touched. "Mr. Griffin," he said, "keep Jack. You are sending him away because he influenced us. Then it is we who will be making him unhappy; he will have to bear the blame for us. It is true we went with him, but we went because we wanted to; he didn't force us to go. Wouldn't it be fair, then, to punish us a little more and him a little less?"

"I have said that I shall send him away, and I shall send him away. The truth is, I have had enough of his rascalities."

John tried to smile as he went on with his appeal. "Mr. Griffin, you told me if I got three first prizes at school you would give me anything I asked for. Well, I've got the three prizes. Now I ask you to forgive Jack."

"Oh, no; not that!"

"I ask it of you."

The foreman was moved by so much generosity. "I cannot refuse," said Mr. Griffin; "since it must be so, so be it. When a thing is promised, it must be done. But in the future I shall be more careful; I shall promise nothing unless I know what I am promising! Jack

may stay then. He owes his pardon to the intervention and kindness of his comrade. I hope he will not forget it. But from this time forth there must be no going on the stage, no more night absences. You have traded upon my good nature, and have made me suspicious. How can I believe you now, even when you are telling me the truth?"

The broken bough broke thereafter without assistance from Jack; he returned no more to the stage. He was sorry for his fate, for the work that pleased him was the work that was most like pleasure. He had assumed, moreover, a stately air, and fancied that he produced a considerable effect when he said, "I play at the Ambigu." He was greatly vexed one day when some one responded: "Play at the Ambigu, do you? What at? marbles?"

Johnnie continued to be a good deal puzzled over the way in which the lost clothes had got back that morning to the foot of his bed. He thought he understood, however, when one day he saw Mr. Griffin talking in the office with the stage manager. As he drew near, he heard Mr. Griffin say, —

"I'm much obliged to you for helping me out with that little experiment; it was a great success. I don't believe that my truants will ever try that game again."

IX.

A GAME OF MARBLES.

For more than a month, nothing of any consequence happened, with the exception of an incident which resulted in a good deal of distress to poor Johnnie. The lad had taken to smoking. Once in the workshop, when he was indulging in that pastime, — an occupation in which no boy should indulge, — Mr. Griffin came upon the scene. The apprentice thrust his cigarette, all lighted as it was, into his trousers pocket. The foreman had some directions to give him, and detained him for several minutes.

"Seems to me," said Mr. Griffin suddenly, "that I smell smoke. Something is burning." Johnnie turned red, but said nothing.

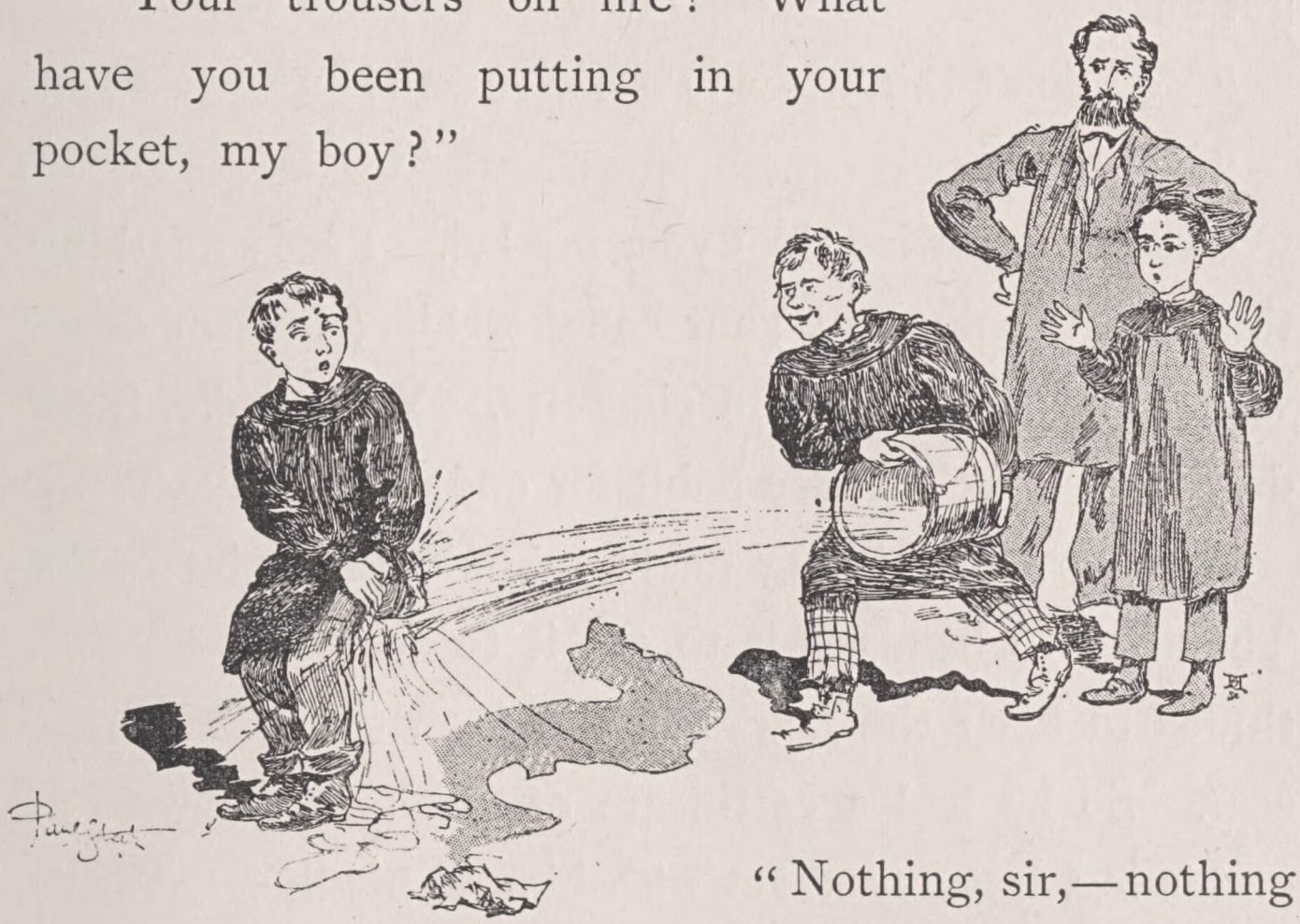
"Yes," said a workman with a sniff; "it's cloth too."

There is a story to the effect that a Spartan youth, having stolen a fox, concealed it beneath his cloak, and the fox, in his effort to get away, bit him cruelly. But rather than utter a cry of pain, the boy was heroic

enough to endure his suffering with a smile upon his face. Johnnie was very far from being a Spartan, and as his flesh began to scorch he could bear up no longer.

"My trousers are afire, sir!" he called out, putting his hand to his pocket. "I shall be blistered!"

"Your trousers on fire! What have you been putting in your pocket, my boy?"



"Nothing, sir,—nothing at all." Johnnie drew out a smouldering handkerchief, and threw it on the floor.

"Fire! Fire!" cried Jack. He seized a pail of water, and threw it over his comrade, and so extinguished the threatening conflagration. The workmen came running up. "The bucket brigade ain't needed; fire's out," said Jack, who never stood on ceremony, even with a question of grammar.

"Once more I ask you," said Mr. Griffin to Johnnie, "how did your pocket get afire? Were you carrying matches?"

"Yes, sir," replied Johnnie, who was trying to wipe himself dry; "yes, sir, that was it; a match must have got afire."

"You don't think of any other reason?"

"No, sir."

"I am more wise than you, my lad. I see something there on the floor, in your handkerchief; thrown down with it, no doubt. It's a cigarette. You smoke, then, do you? That's a nice habit for one of your age."

The burn on his leg made Johnnie suffer intensely. They had to bandage it to get it to heal; and he continued to keep the marks in the form of a permanent scar. So he had a certificate of disobedience written on his leg, to carry about with him all his life. Wasn't that delightful?

While Mr. Griffin was rebuking Johnnie, Jack slipped away, and hid the pipe which he had taken so much trouble to be on friendly terms with. So much trouble, — ah, yes; but one must be "a man," you know. It was a singular fact that Jack, who strove so valiantly to be a man in smoking, made no effort whatever to be a man at work. He was much given to playing marbles,

and always had some in his pocket. When he was out on an errand, and met other idlers like himself, he was always ready to join in a game. The time came when his fondness for this sport cost him dear.

He was sent out to fill an order. Jeweller's apprentices carry their goods in small tin boxes, which are fastened to them with an iron chain. Arrived at the park, near the Palais-Royal, he met, near a toy and candy stand, with three or four young loafers, who were waiting for something to turn up. His conscience told him that he had better get away from them as quickly as possible; but they hung on and proposed a game of marbles, and he agreed.

"All right," he said; "but it must be a short one, for I've got some jewellery in this box that ought to be delivered at once."

"Oh, yes; only one little game."

The game began. An older and larger boy watched the play with much interest. The other players made as if they did not know him; but from certain signs that they exchanged, it was clear that he belonged to the same gang, and for some reason did not wish to be openly recognized.

A shot was made, and they all got their heads together to decide impartially as to the result. The game

was ended, and Jack, excited with his victory, — for he had won, — was flushed with animation and pleasure.

"You've lost, you fellows," he cried triumphantly. "I scooped the lot."

Having pocketed his gains, Jack concluded to finish his errand. It was not yet very late, and Mr. Griffin had told him to be quick. Suddenly he turned pale, and glanced around wildly.

"My box!" he stammered; "my box! Somebody has stolen my box!"

The boys with whom he had been playing seemed to be very much surprised. One of them pretended to remember that in the midst of the game he had seen some strange-looking fellow hanging around, and that probably was the thief. He said this to draw Jack's suspicions from the larger boy, who had been watching them, and who had disappeared.

Jack's grief was lamentable to see. Huge tears rolled down his face, and the sight of his despair attracted everybody in the park. The babies who were sticking up chestnut leaves in the sand and called them forests; the little girls who were holding dolls' tea-parties, or skipping the rope, or rolling hoops, or sailing balloons; the mammas, who talked together under the shade of the trees; the nurses, with their big beribboned caps and their immense aprons, — everybody came hurrying up to see what the jeweller's apprentice was crying about.

"Don't let him get near the fountain," said a little girl, with an air of great seriousness; "he might throw himself in. Somebody's doll was drowned there the other day."

The officer in charge of the park drew near. He

was a very dignified, very important-looking personage, in his handsome bottle-green uniform, with his gilt-handled sword; and on his breast he wore the cross of

the Legion of Honor. As he came up, the mothers of the little girls and the nurses respectfully drew back.

The officer understood at once what had happened,

and that without waiting to hear any explanation. He drew up his white mustache to the tip of his red nose, until it assumed the appearance of a magnificent circumflex accent, and feeling for his peaceful snuff-box, said, —

"I know how it is. Well, my lad, you are the fifth to whom the same thing has happened this year. Your jewellery has been stolen. Another time you'll be careful how you get to playing with the first lazy rascals you come across."

"Poor little boy," said the people, as they went away. "It's a hard place for him, all the same. His employer will scold him, — beat him perhaps."

"Ah," sighed Jack amid his sobs, "such things don't happen to anybody but me."

Of course Jack was wrong. Such things do not happen, it is true, to boys who are faithful to their duty, but do happen to those who, like him, are faithless to their trust.

"I can never go back," he sobbed; "I can never go back again." And after meditating a moment or two he departed at a rapid pace, and quickly disappeared.

X.

BISQUINE ON THE TRAIL.

JACK'S a good while getting back," said Mr. Griffin, looking at the clock; "he must be having a good time somewhere." Night came, and Jack had not yet returned.

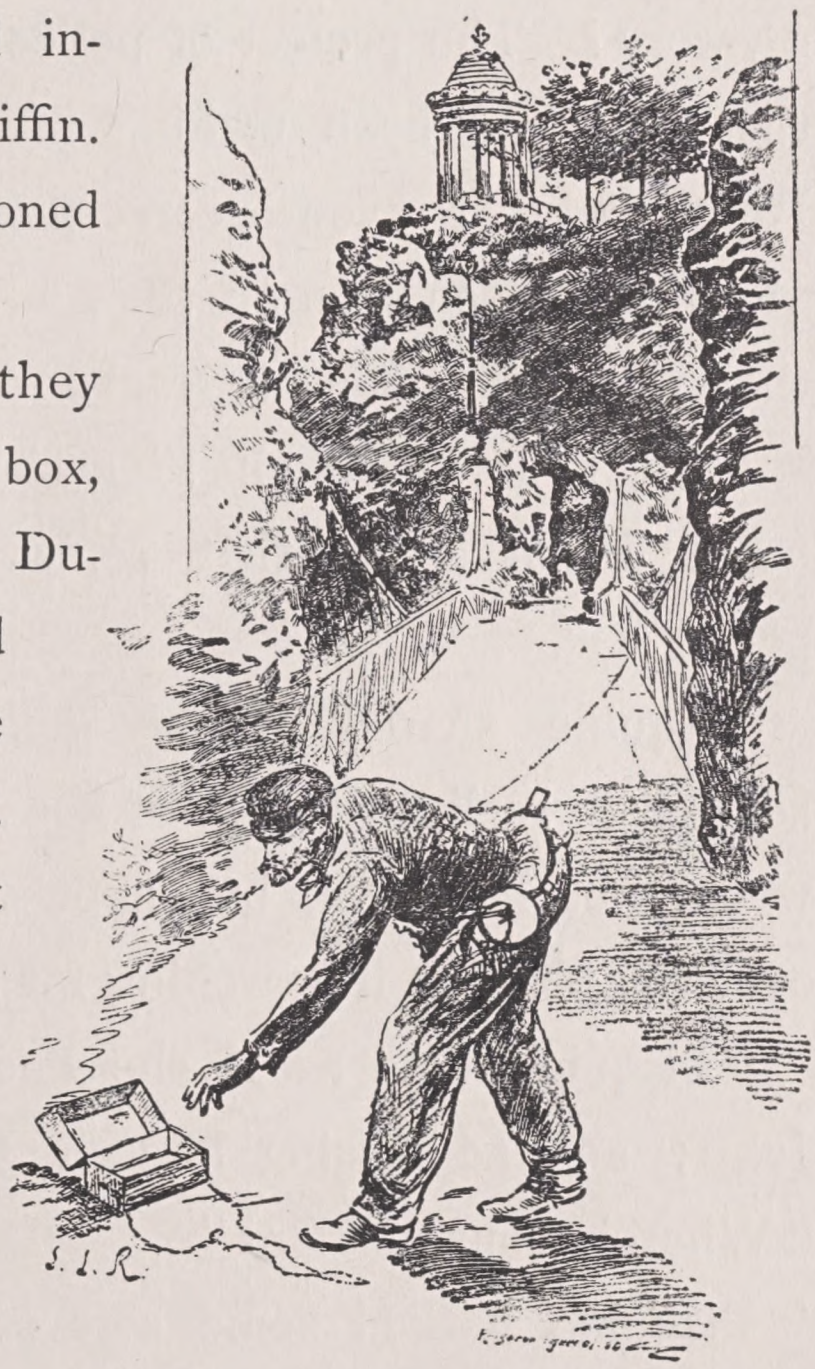
"What," said Mother Bonnet, "not back yet? Oh! something must have happened to him; I am sure of it! I'm going to keep his soup hot for him."

They sent John to the place where Jack was to go, and found that Jack had not been there. By night they were very much alarmed. Mr. Griffin set the police at work on the case; but neither at the hospitals among the injured, nor anywhere else, could any youth be found who answered to the description. Good Mother Bonnet did not sleep at all; she was distracted with anxiety. "Oh, dear!" she said, "oh, dear! What can have happened to him?" Day came; and the fugitive did not appear.

"Let us return to work," said Mr. Griffin. "The

poor lad must have thought that the jewellery in his box was worth more than it really was; and he has run away, at the instigation of some evil associates."

At the workshops this was the sole subject of conversation. Policemen came all day long and had interviews with Mr. Griffin. They even questioned John and Johnnie.



About two o'clock they reported that a tin box, bearing the name of Dupont, had been found by a workman in the Buttes-Chaumont park. It was the one that had contained the jewellery, but it was empty. The fact that the lock had been forced open was regarded as significant.

"It could not have been Jack who opened it," said Mr. Griffin; "he would have used his key. The box has been broken open, and must, therefore, have been stolen."

Up to that time he had been very calm in his demeanor; but now he began to exhibit a good deal of uneasiness. What had become of Jack? It was all very strange.

Would another night pass without the solution of the mystery? The prefect of police informed Mr. Dupont that they had been making investigations outside of Paris; and that a youth, corresponding to the description given, had been seen on the route to Amiens, and that they were now upon his track.

"Ah, if it is only he!" exclaimed Mother Bonnet. "But I am afraid that something worse has happened."

Bisquine shared in the general disquietude, and seemed to realize the loss of her master. At night she would not lie down, but kept whining, and went all over the place as if searching for something.

"Bisquine acts as if she knew all about it," said John; and addressing himself to the dog he asked, "Where's your master?"

Bisquine barked some sort of response, and threw herself against a door leading to an attic. It often happens that dogs know what should be done, but do not know how to interpret their knowledge to others. This time it so happened that the door was unfastened,

and Bisquine disappeared. She was gone a long time; and when she came back, she was very emphatic in making her presence known; and then went again toward the attic, turning back frequently in dog fashion, as if inviting the others to follow.

Mother Bonnet, accompanied by John, had occasion to go to the attic to get sausages, and Bisquine followed them with frantic demonstrations of joy. The good woman had no more than entered the place when she looked about wildly, and exclaimed in alarm, —

"For the land's sake; there's somebody up here!" Mother Bonnet was not mistaken. Somebody was there; and that somebody, shrinking back shamefacedly in a corner, was Jack.

"Well," Bisquine seemed to say, as she jumped madly about, "I hope you are stupid enough! Dear me; and these two-legged people act as if they thought they were always so very bright!"

Jack had concealed himself after the manner of an ostrich, which thinks it is hidden when it has its head in the sand.

"What are you doing here?" asked Mother Bonnet. "Ah, wretch that you are, to have caused us so much worry! We're almost dead with looking for you. How long have you been here?"

Jack got up; he was covered with dust, and littered with straw.

"About two days," he responded.

"Two days! Can it be possible? Haven't you been hungry?"

"Oh, yes; I've been hungry."

"And you have been here two days without eating anything?"

"Yes; I had something to eat," said Jack. "I ate sausages."

"Have you eaten them all?" exclaimed Mother Bonnet, lifting her hands with a despairing gesture.

"Yes, I ate them all, except a little piece that

I had left, and that Bisquine took a few moments ago."

It was probable that Bisquine did not think the tip end of a sausage too great a reward for all the suffering that had been saved.

Mother Bonnet was sorry about the sausages; but the delight at seeing alive the poor child, whom she believed to be dead, was so great that she hadn't the heart to scold him.

John had leaped down the stairs four at a time, rushed like a lunatic into the shop, and called out, —

"Jack's found. He's in the attic. Come and see!"

"It's just like the little scamp," said Mr. Griffin, realizing how unnecessary had been the anxiety of the last two days.

"So here you are, you good-for-nothing," cried Mr. Dupont at a distance, as Jack was led trembling before him. "We were foolish, indeed, to waste our strength in worrying about you."

Jack undertook to explain. He said nothing about the game of marbles, but pretended that he had been robbed while going along the street; that discovering the theft, he had not dared show himself at the shop, and so had hidden in the attic. Once in the attic, he had been afraid to come out.

"Then, if no one had gone up there, you would have stayed?"

"No," said Jack artlessly; "I should have come down. There weren't any more sausages."

"Ah, yes, Mr. Charles," lamented Mother Bonnet; "he's eaten the whole of them. But he must have been very hungry, mustn't he?"

"Glutton, scatter-brain, sluggard, — you certainly have a fine collection of vices." And Mr. Dupont sought his bed-chamber, saying: "We'll attend to this matter to-morrow, Griffin."

"We will, indeed, sir."

Jack was given his choice of two things. He could pay for the jewellery, or he could leave. Mr. Dupont estimated that the jewels were worth forty francs, that being cost price. Jack, instead of spending the fees that he got, or adding them to his weekly earnings, was to put the money aside until the required sum had been attained. He had three months in which to accomplish this. If by that time the jewellery was not paid for, he would be sent away, and must never hope to be taken back. They might have made up the sum out of his wages; but in order that the lesson might be more impressive they desired that it should be the result of his own savings.

"Forty francs," thought Jack; "forty sums of twenty sous each, — there's richness for you! And all for what? To pay for five marbles! So they cost me eight francs apiece. I made a bad bargain that time. I could have got them for a sou at any grocer's shop."

XI.

JOHN'S SAVINGS.

SEVERAL weeks had passed since the incidents last related. "Next month," said Mr. Griffin to Jack, "you must finish paying for the jewellery you lost. How much have you in hand now?"

"I don't know," answered Jack.

Have you noticed how people often say they don't know when anything disagreeable is asked them?

"You can easily find out," responded Mr. Griffin; "reckon it up."

That was an order. Jack counted and counted again. He was ashamed to declare the result.

"Well," continued the foreman, "you have counted. How much is it?"

"I've got — I've got — well, I've got seventeen sous."

"Is it possible? Seventeen sous already! My lad, at this rate you will have as many as twenty-four by the end of next month. Evidently there is nothing to be

done with you. You may take it for granted that month after next you will be no longer here."

John found Jack in tears. "What's the matter?" he asked; "what's happened?"

"They're going to send me away. I've only seventeen sous. I thought they were only joking when they

told me I'd have to pay up those forty francs. I thought they would forget about it. I didn't realize they meant business. I'm in a fine fix."

"What have you done with your wages and your fees?"

"I've bought things for Bisquine to eat."

"Yes; and more than that, you've bought sweets for yourself to eat. Then your pipe has cost more than

Bisquine. Give up tobacco, save your money, and you'll find out that I'm right; and next month you'll have your forty francs."

"Oh, nonsense!"

"Try it."

"Well, I'll try."

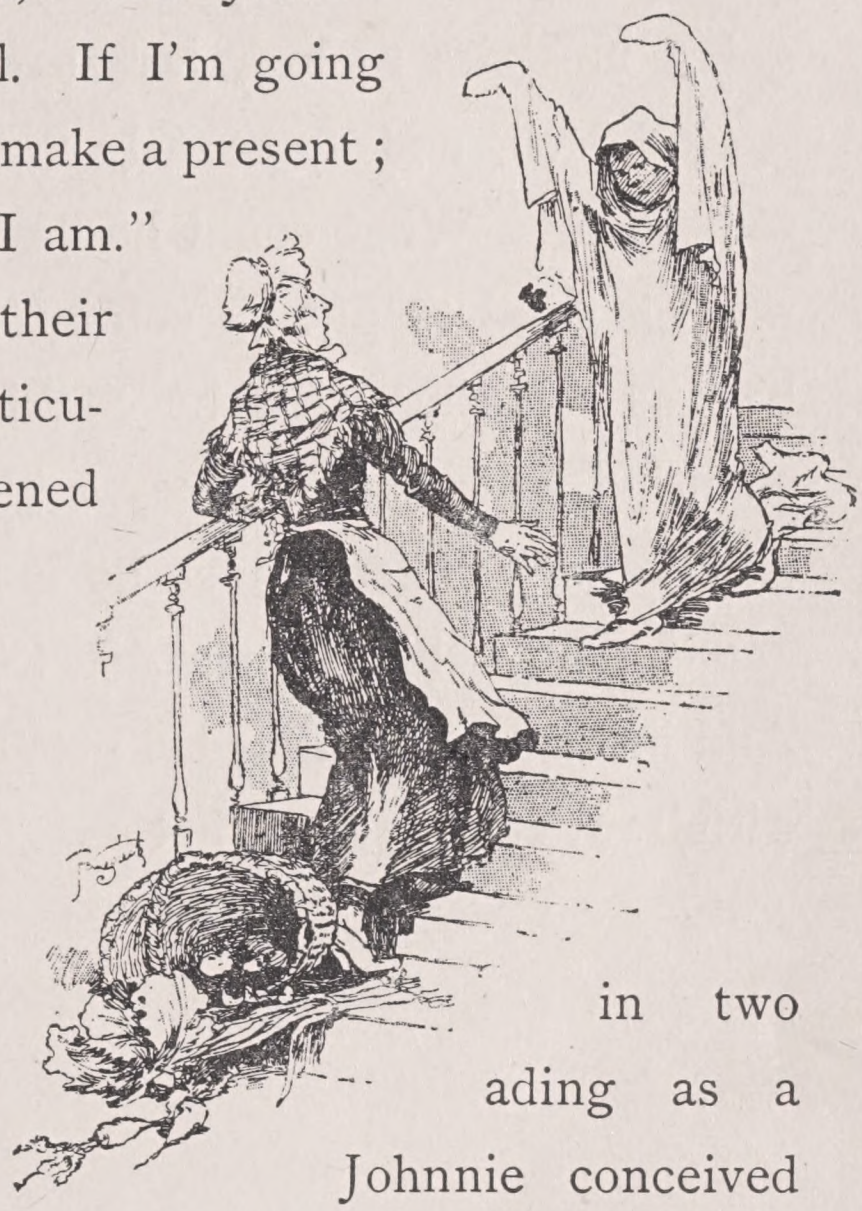
John calculated that with the best intentions in the world it would be impossible for Jack to get the forty francs together in time. On the other hand, he knew that Mr. Dupont was not likely to yield when he had made up his mind to anything. It was plain, then, that Jack would be sent away unless some means could be found to assist him. After all, why not? Poor Jack had serious faults; but he had also some good qualities, and he was not bad at heart. Why should he not be saved from taking the wrong path? Is it not humane and right that we should help one another?

Suddenly the idea of saving up his own earnings flashed into John's mind. What a surprise that would be for Jack! Several days before the critical moment, while he was lamenting over his inability to attain the desired object, how delightful it would be to say to him: "How much do you need to make it up? Well, then, we'll put in the rest!" John said "We'll put in the rest," for he counted on help from Johnnie. The latter,

in fact, agreed, but declared that he wouldn't be able to do very much; that he saw no reason why we should rob ourselves of everything for the sake of other people.

"He'll pay us back," said John.

"Yes; a lot he will. If I'm going to make a present, I'll make a present; then I'll know where I am."



They began to save their money. Nothing particular of importance happened in the workshop for some time after this, except that Johnnie scared Mother Bonnet almost to death by wrapping himself up in two sheets and masquerading as a ghost. A little later Johnnie conceived the absurd idea of engraving sous. Mr. Griffin explained to him that the law punished mutilation of coin, and that if he tried to put his sous in circulation he would run the risk of being arrested.

"How much, now?" asked John one day of Jack, as the eventful time drew near.

"Well, if you want to know, just thirteen francs."

"You're getting on; don't be discouraged."

'Twas all very well for John to say don't be discouraged. Jack had made a semblance at trying, and discouragement came easy to him. One night, as he was going up-stairs to bed, Jack saw John stooping over a work bench, and apparently very much occupied with something. What could he be making? Jack at first was disposed to put up some trick on him; but while he was thinking what he could do, he saw John was counting over some money. The coins rang against each other. There must be a lot of them.

"Ho, ho — hidden treasure!" said Jack to himself. And instead of making his presence known, he quietly withdrew, stepping on tip-toe.

XII.

THE ROBBERY.

THE next day Jack, contrary to his usual manner, seemed to be very gloomy. Ordinarily he had a great appetite, but now he ate very little. He avoided meeting John's eyes. Everything seemed to annoy him, even Bisquine's affectionate caresses.

The three apprentices went to bed at the usual hour ; but Jack did not sleep. When he heard his two companions breathing heavily, he got up, very, very softly, taking the utmost precaution. The room was extremely dark. He tip-toed his way to the door, carefully lifted the latch, and pulled it towards him ; the door creaked. Terrified at the noise, he stood rooted to the spot, not daring to go on or to go back. One of the sleepers stirred uneasily, as if he were going to wake up. Jack listened with all his ears, greatly alarmed. Nothing happened, and at length he ventured to continue on his course. Half way down the staircase he stopped, and leaned, all of a tremble, against the wall.

What was Jack going to do? A lamentable deed. He was going — he was going, — my pen hesitates to set down the words — he was going to steal from John, his little comrade!

He had seen John counting the money, and he knew where it was hidden. The unhappy wretch, who with industry and thrift might have been able to save these forty francs that he needed, had preferred to be idle and to waste his money, and now had reached the point where to gain the desired end he was willing to stoop to crime.

He scrambled down the staircase. When he reached the workshop, which was haunted by mysterious shadows, a frightful panic seized him. What if somebody should see him? He was shaken by a chill, and his teeth chattered. His hands were clenched; his

eyes opened wide and glared horribly. His cheeks turned greenish in his pallor, and his hair stood right straight up on the top of his head.

He fancied that strange shapes threatened him, and that these shapes took human form. He thought he felt hands laid on his shoulders, that rustlings passed about him, and that sinister voices chuckled in his ears. Before his eyes he saw a procession of little vagabonds, like those he had often beheld in reality, each with his tiny hands firmly pinioned, and with a policeman on either side. He had

visions of ghastly prisons and the horrors of the convict galleys. All at once he saw before him, clad in white, an actual form, a human shape, which arose and stood upright before him. When he moved, It moved; when he stopped, It stopped; when he lifted his arm, It lifted an arm. His terror was so great, that he cried for mercy, and fell on his knees with outstretched hands. His hands touched glass. What he had taken for Something, was his own image, reflected in a mirror.

He got up. A momentary sense of shame for the deed he contemplated came over him, and he was disposed to flee. Good and evil instincts battled fiercely within him. He sought the door to go back, but in his agitation he could not find it. In groping about, his hand fell on John's work-bench. The hidden treasure

was there, — there he could find the money! The good instincts were wholly vanquished.

The moon, hitherto concealed, now shone forth. The workshop was inundated with her searching light. Jack's shadow, enlarged to gigantic proportions, swept across the floor, bent upward at the baseboard, and struck upon the wall. To Jack, this sudden illumination was more terrifying than darkness.

Jack saw the pasteboard box and its contents. He thrust out his hand; it was full, — full of sous and silver pieces. He had it, then! Given over to evil, hesitating no longer, paying no heed to the voice of conscience thundering in his ears: "Thou art a thief! Thou art a thief! Thou art a thief!" — he fled. The moon did not hide her face; she would not be the accomplice of his sins. She followed the malefactor even to his bed; but it was in vain that she sought to denounce him. John and Johnnie slept in peace, having nothing with which to reproach themselves; and they had not awakened to perceive the absence of their guilty companion.

Jack didn't know what to do with his booty. What should he do with the money? Should he hide it in his bed? That wouldn't do at all. Mother Bonnet would be sure to find it. One by one, that the coins might make no sound, he put them carefully in his handkerchief and tied them up; then he placed his spoils in the bottom of one of his shoes. Then he went to bed, but not to sleep. His mind was haunted by the spectres of shame and remorse. He burned with fever; he shivered with chill.

Work went on the next day as usual. Having to take the money from his shoe, Jack hid it in a corner,

where he thought no one could possibly find it. As he had confessed to John the night before that he had only thirteen francs, it would not do for him to put the stolen money with his own, for the sudden increase of his wealth would be too suspicious. He contented himself with taking fifty sous; and the rest, about twenty francs in all, he was quite at loss how to dispose of.

That money was a constant terror to him. With every breath he drew, he trembled on the brink of discovery. Neglecting to take it with him when he was sent on an errand, he dreaded to go back, lest the theft might have come to light in the course of his absence. Ah, yes; that game of marbles was costing him very dear!

One day while he was at his work he saw John slyly fumbling about the work-bench. He knew that the other must be wanting to put a few sous in the little box. He watched him with troubled eyes, and distinctly saw him rumaging every nook and corner. John stood up, very red in the face; Jack hung his head and turned very pale.

"I've been robbed," said John. "I can't find the money I put here."

"What's that?" interrupted Mr. Griffin.

"I say, sir, that I put some money here, and it's been taken."

"Tut, tut!" responded the foreman in a stern tone; "you must have overlooked it. Look again. We don't have thieves here."

The workmen left their tasks and gathered around, anxious lest they fall into unjust suspicion. Jack had the hardihood to say, —

"I hope they haven't taken my money too!" He leaned over his bench. "Oh, no," he continued; "it is still there. I have my thirteen francs."

The foreman repeated his belief that the money had not been stolen. "Strangers never come here. You haven't looked carefully. John, you'll find your money later on."

"Well," said Jack, "I'm going to put mine where it 'll be safe; then, if there's thievery going on here" —

Mr. Griffin looked at him so sternly that he cast down his eyes in great confusion.

"We'll have a hunt for it during the dinner-hour," said Mr. Griffin; "and if we don't find it, I'll consider what we had better do."

Johnnie was absent during the whole scene. Jack made as if he would console John.

"Look here, Jack," said John to the other. "You are the one that ought to complain most."

"What! I?" interrupted Jack, all of a tremble, his

fears making him fancy an accusation in everything that was said to him.

"Yes, you; for that money was your own."

"Mine? Well, I guess not! Mine's put away."

"You weren't able to make up your forty francs; so we thought, Johnnie and I, that we'd help you out. We've been saving up. That little hoard was to be a surprise to you. Fact is, it was your money."

"For me?" said Jack; "for me and" — he did not finish. He was afraid in his emotion that he had already betrayed himself with his outcry and start of surprise. He was overcome with grief. "For me!" he said to himself in despair. "Oh, it's enough to drive me crazy!"

The police might come now if they liked; no punishment could be found equal to that which he was now undergoing. He had actually stolen the money that his more than generous comrades had planned to give him. He had not only stolen from others, but he had stolen from himself. The money he had taken from a friend had been meant for him. He might have it freely and openly, and to get it he had committed a crime. What a monster he must be! He compared himself with his comrades, who had denied themselves to help him and whom he had robbed of the fruits of their self-denial,

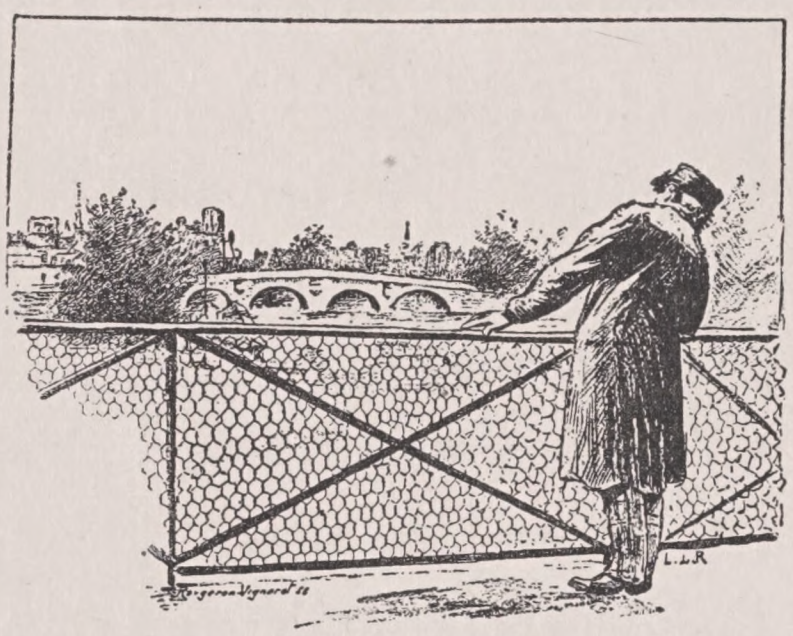
and he was bitterly ashamed. Yes, his heart was sore with his remorse; and he suffered deeply.

He thought of throwing himself into John's arms, and of seeking forgiveness by telling the truth, — the whole truth. There was still time. The money had not been spent. But he was so awkward, and so unused to asking pardon for his sins, that he couldn't bring himself to the point. The thought of putting the money back did not occur to him. In that case John would have thought himself mistaken, and would have said, "I've found it. I didn't look carefully." And they would have heard no more about it.

But who knows. Fate perhaps ordained that Jack's guilty action should not be allowed to pass without further punishment. It may be that in order to bring him back into the pathway of uprightness and honor, Jack, who did not learn his lessons easily, needed to suffer more; for he was destined to undergo a long and painful and severe course of retribution.

XIII.

THE THIEF DISCOVERED.

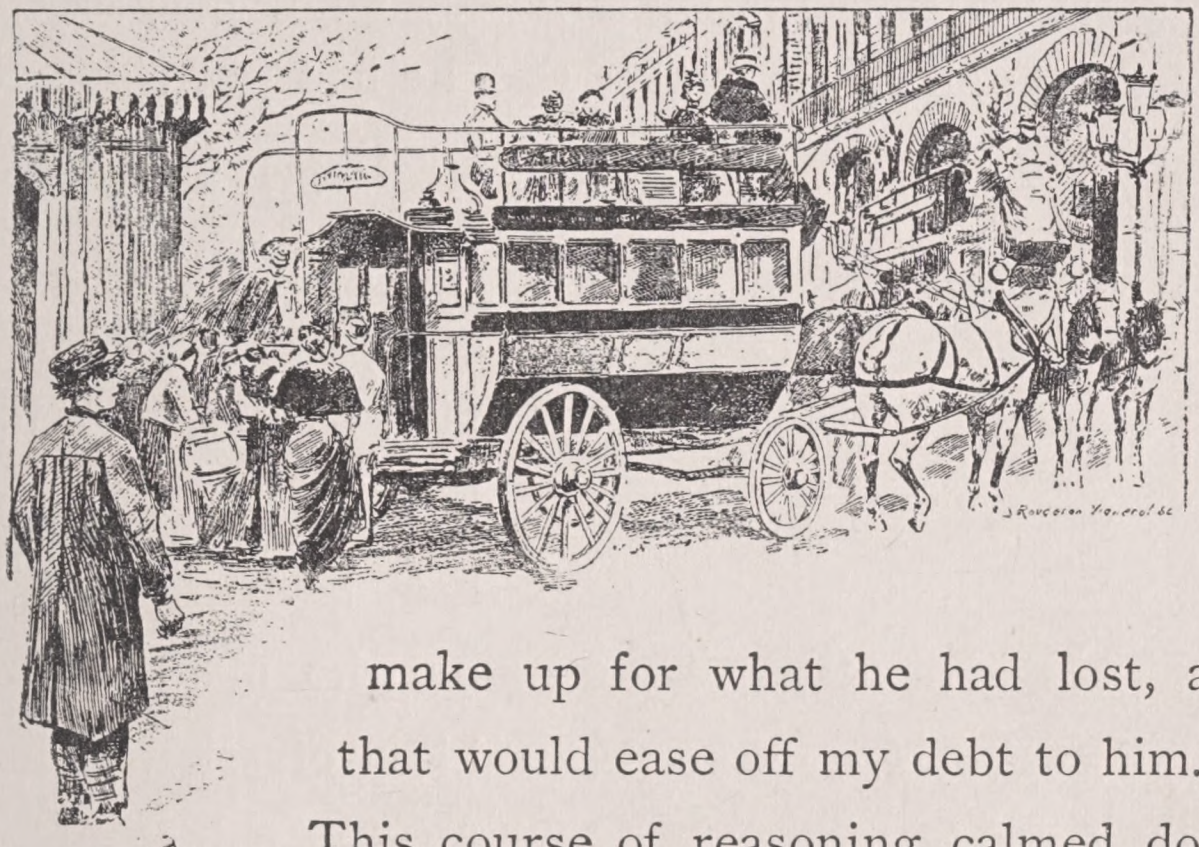


That afternoon Jack went out on an errand. The money burned in his pockets. He planned to throw it from one of the bridges into the Seine or else into a sewer. He rode in an ominibus to get rid of six sous. He found some big boys playing at pitch-penny. He played with them, hoping to lose, but luck was against him; he won, and they wanted to fight him. He gave a handful of money to a beggar, and hoped this deed of generosity would bring him happiness.

He paused in a doorway, and counted what he had left, — ten francs and eleven sous.

"If I said that I found ten francs in gold," he

thought, "they would believe me; for anybody might find ten francs in gold. I could offer it to John, to



make up for what he had lost, and that would ease off my debt to him."

This course of reasoning calmed down his conscience a little. He even fancied himself applying this remedy several times, and so repairing his sin. His distress of mind was so great that even the thought of partial restitution was comforting to him. He changed his money for a gold piece. When conscience is tranquil, the

stomach asserts itself. It occurred to Jack that he was hungry, and he went boldly to a bakeshop and spent eight sous for cakes. The eight sous thus disposed of, and the fifty sous that he had put aside, were all the profit that he would derive from his abominable action. In fact, it was very little; but for many years it has been known that he who makes thievery his profession is a fool for his pains, and that the only way truly to get on in the world is by being honest.

Clutching the gold piece he went home. He fancied that nothing would be easier than to say, "I've found ten francs!" When it came to the point of telling this lie, he hesitated. He felt sure that they would not believe him, that he would get all mixed up in trying to make explanations, and that his embarrassment would show his guilt. What should he do with the ten francs then? Run the risk of having them

found in his possession? No; on the whole, the best way would be to do as he had first thought of doing.

After starting to speak a hundred times, he said suddenly, as if struck with an idea, and in a tone which he strove to make natural, —

"Say, I'm in luck, I am! What do you think? I've found ten francs!"

The workmen all looked at him, and then at one another. Who ever heard of an apprentice finding ten francs, and waiting until after he had got to work before speaking of it? Would not his first impulse be as soon as he reached the threshold to shout forth his joy at the discovery he had made?

"You are better off than John, then," said Mr. Griffin. "He loses twenty francs, and you find ten of them. But of course they are not the same? No? Sometimes, you know, chance is a queer thing."

"But you see, sir," replied Jack, laughing with a laugh that rang false, "they couldn't be the same. Ten francs are not twenty francs, and then the money John lost wasn't in gold."

"You are quite sure that it wasn't in gold?"

Jack looked troubled, and then suddenly recovered himself. "I don't suppose it was."

"No," interrupted John quickly; "it was silver and copper."

"If any of my sous turn up," said Johnnie, "I'd recognize them at once. They are the same ones, Mr. Griffin, that I did the engraving on."

"That's your way, is it?" said Mr. Griffiin; "you save up sous for others that you can't use yourself."

Jack took the ten-franc piece from his pocket and held it up.

"How did you find it?" the foreman asked.

"In the mud."

"For a coin found in the mud, it looks very clean."

"Oh! I wiped it."

"Whereabouts did you find it?"

"On the boulevard, near an omnibus stand."

Mr. Griffin looked thoughtful. Jack, delighted with his inventiveness, and believing that his falsehood was bound to succeed, went on talking.

"Then I said to myself, 'There, now, that comes in well; John's lost his money, and I'll give him my ten francs!'"

"'My ten francs,'" said Mr. Griffin; "they are not yours."

"Why not, if I found them? Perhaps you don't think I found 'em? Perhaps you think I stole 'em!"

"Goodness, how you run on! If you get so hot, trying to defend yourself when nobody has accused you, we shall surely think you are guilty. I say once more that those ten francs are not yours. Money found in the street should be taken to the commissary of police, in order that the loser may reclaim it. To keep it would be a theft, — a theft that conscience reproves, and that the law would punish."

"But," said Jack artlessly, not expecting this turn of affairs, "but suppose nobody lost it?"

"Eh? What's that you say?"

"Suppose that no one came to reclaim the money?" said Jack, perceiving that he had very nearly given himself away.

"After a year and a day it would belong to you."

"Then in a year and a day I could have it."

"Yes; if no one came to ask for it meanwhile, I tell you."

"Well, nobody would come," said Jack, in a deliberate tone.

"How do you know? Your answers are very strange and very positive."

A workman, who was annoyed by the theft, and vexed to think that any of them might be under suspicion, spoke up, and said, —

"It's pretty queer, I think."

"Queer! Queer!" cried Jack. "Perhaps you mean that I stole it; you great, lumbering sneak, you!" Once started, Jack couldn't stop. "Perhaps you want to say that I stole that other money? Could I know that they had money there in a box? What could I have done with the money, supposing I'd taken it? If I'd kept it, I should have been found out. Search me, if you think I did it. Search, and see for yourself! Here's my money in this box; there are fifteen francs. John knows that I have fifteen francs." He brought his box, and with a fine gesture of assumed indignation threw it on the bench. The coins flew in all directions.

"Count it," said Jack proudly.

One sou rolled to the floor. Johnnie stooped over and picked it up. Just as he was about to throw it with the others, he paused and looked at it in surprise.

"Why, that's very funny," he said; "it's one of my engraved sous!" They all gathered around him. "It's one of the sous that I put in John's box!"

"Here's another," said the workman whom Jack had called a lumbering sneak.

"Another still — and another," said Johnnie. "Those are my sous. How did they get there?"

Jack had nothing to say. He had lost his magnificent air of assurance. He was whiter than his shirt-collar, and all of a tremble; it was pitiable to see him.

"Jack," asked Mr. Griffin sternly, "where did those sous come from?"

"I — I — don't — I don't know — I — I" — stammered the unhappy lad, shrinking with terror, and seeing all hope of escape taken from him. He burst into sobs.

Mr. Griffin seized him with one hand, and lifted him on to the work-bench.

"There, men," he said; "there's the thief!" John and Johnnie looked on in amazement. "And this time," said the foreman, "there'll be no mercy for him. A thief!"

They all stood in a group around the miserable

wretch, who continued to sob, hiding his face in his crossed arms. Mr. Griffin reminded the boy of all the kindness that had been shown him, and of the many times that he had been pardoned for his faults.

"Stealing from the comrades who were trying to help you; taking the money that they were going to give you! You scoundrel! you gallows' bird!"

"Oh, forgive me!" sobbed the despairing wretch, dragging himself to his knees; "oh, forgive me! I'll never do it again, I promise you. Forgive me this time!"

"Let you off once more? No. Our patience is at an end." He called the porter.

"What is Mr. Griffin up to now?" said John and Johnnie to each other.

"Stephen," said the foreman, "while we're waiting for Mr. Dupont, take this scapegrace to the cellar and lock him up there. Lock him up," he repeated. "Use the safety-lock, and see that the windows are barred." Jack made no struggle. He followed the porter humbly, with bowed head. The door closed behind him; and they could hear his violent sobs in the distance. Greatly affected by what had occurred, each resumed his task in silence.

XIV.

ESCAPE.

When Mr. Dupont came in, they went down to the cellar to look for Jack and to summon him to appear before a sort of family council. They were disposed to give him the benefit of extenuating circumstances, for the reason that he had tried to make restitution of a part of the stolen money, and thus had manifested some degree at least of remorse. They opened the cellar door, and called three times very loudly, "Jack! Jack! Jack!" But Jack did not reply. He had got away.

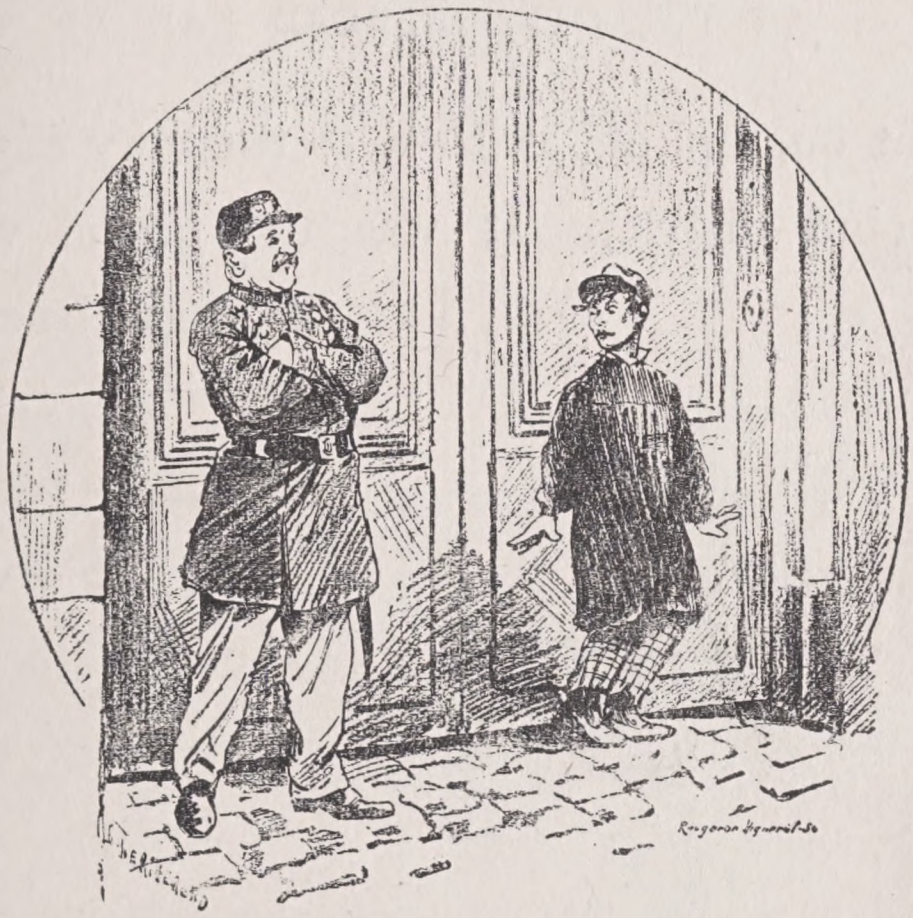
Now, if this were a sensational romance of the kind that Jack was wont to devour in secret, the author would pause at this point in the story, and work up your emotions to the highest pitch by carefully abstaining from telling you what had become of the hero. He

would encourage your alarmed fancy to chase the fugitive into the most unexpected quarters; and it would only be after pages and pages that he would let you find our Jack, in whom, perhaps, you are somewhat interested. For in contrast with him, John and Johnnie seem, — do they not? — a trifle tame? You love them of course

better than you do Jack, but you find them less captivating. They are well-behaved; they are not all the time doing foolish or wicked things; and their lives are not in the least sensational. It has been said that the most fortunate nations are those who have no history; and it is just the same with children who are good. John had no history; Johnnie had none to speak of.

But what a history was Jack's! Why, one could make a volume of it!

Yes; he had got away. Being spare of flesh, he had squeezed through the window in spite of the bars, and thence got into the street. He had run straight ahead,



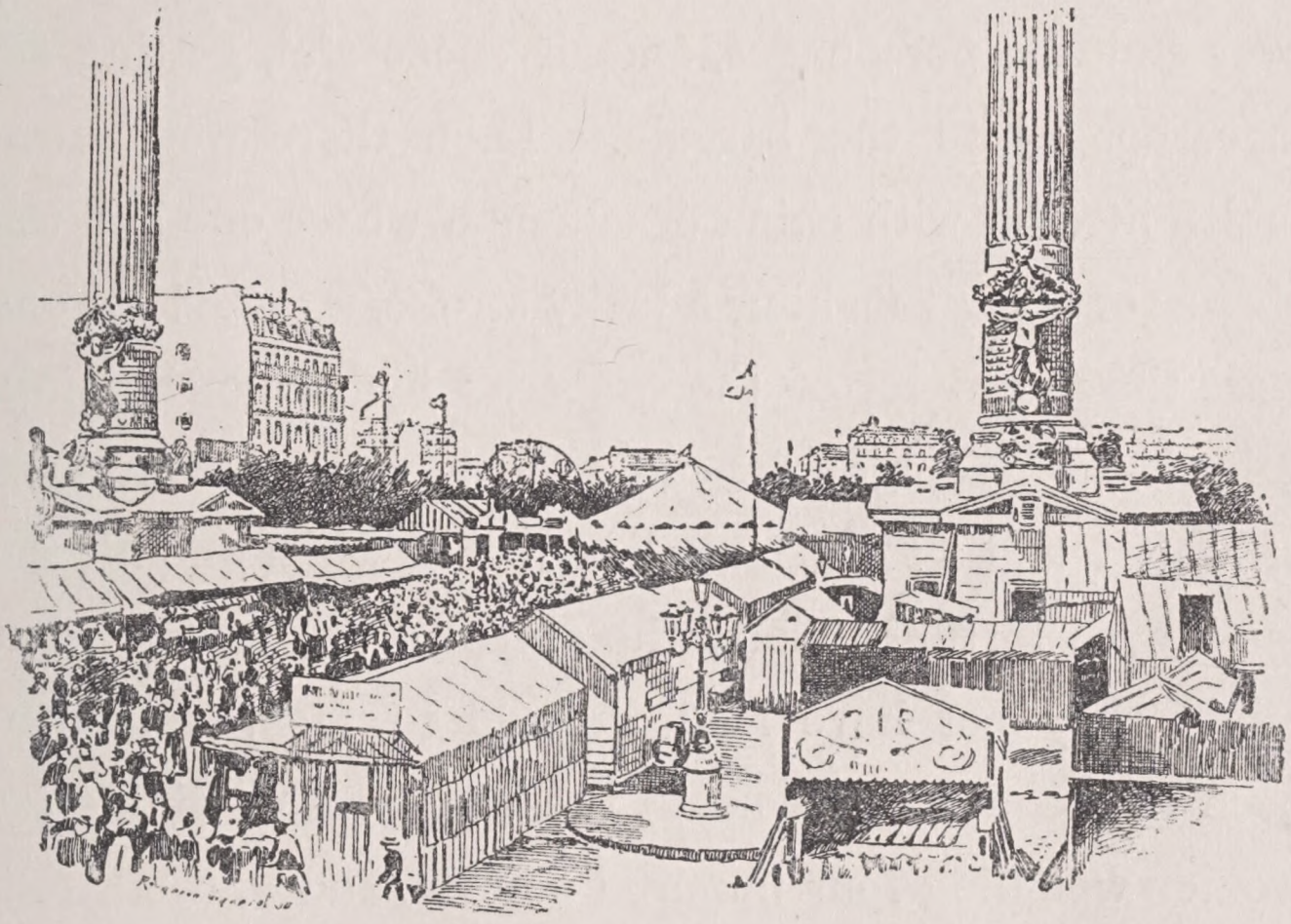
without knowing where, and simply intent on getting away. He did not look back for fear of seeing the police hurrying after him. Out of breath at last, he paused in a doorway. A policeman, who was going by, stopped there too. Jack was very much frightened; he thought that the policeman must know something about him and wanted to arrest him.

XV.

AT THE GINGERBREAD FAIR.

He went on, and on, and on, to the very edge of the Saint-Antoine district. It was the period when the Gingerbread Fair was in full blast. Seeking for distraction, he wandered about among the booths. As it was a week-day, not many people were to be seen. He began to be hungry, and searching his pockets found two sous with which he bought bread; and having eaten it near a drinking fountain, he drew a little water, and drank it from the hollow of his hand.

Night came, and with it the crowd. The lamps were lighted and shone resplendently about the larger booths, while at the smaller ones they scarcely attained the dignity of as many candles. Competition was fierce, and the racket was deafening. The rival showmen bellowed



and bawled and yelled. The organs at the merry-go-rounds, tricked out in tinsel and imitation gems, ground forth agonizing symphonies in response to the winded orchestras in the menageries, where cornets out of tune held the lead. Tambourines rumbled, and the cymbals responded with their sonorous "bang, bang!" By snatches, above this instrumental din, rose the harsh,

deep voice of the mummers, and the sharp, shrill cry of the mountebanks.

Deafened with the noise, and dazed with the lights, the dust, the shouts, the merriment, and the tumult, Jack stopped before the "massacres," where one could, at two shots for a sou, have the privilege of knocking over eminent personages, and, if successful, getting six macaroons into the bargain. Then there were turn-tables littered with china ornaments, where one had the chance of always making a lucky stroke, — provided one were the proprietor of the concern; hydraulic shooting-galleries, where eggs danced and pipes waltzed in a jet of water, and a formidable lion roared when one hit the bull's-eye; fortune-tellers, who revealed the future (what might they not have made known to Jack, if he had been rich enough to consult them!); booths, hiding fat women weighing four hundred pounds, and whose astonishing charms were vouched for on canvas by the Emperor of Austria and the Shah of Persia; bronze-skinned men who were like living statues; copper-helmeted divers, that had brought up from the bottom of the ocean a monstrous devil-fish with a thousand arms.

But the entertainment that best served to make him forget the horrible incidents of the day that had just passed — the affair which did most to bring him into

harmony with the general atmosphere of gayety — was the performance given outside a certain booth to advertise a variety show. He watched the droll fellow who worked the weather-beaten, grinning dummy, that grinned enough without his aid. He saw the silly, much applauded clowns, clad like court fools in purple vests, short breeches, and striped stockings. The

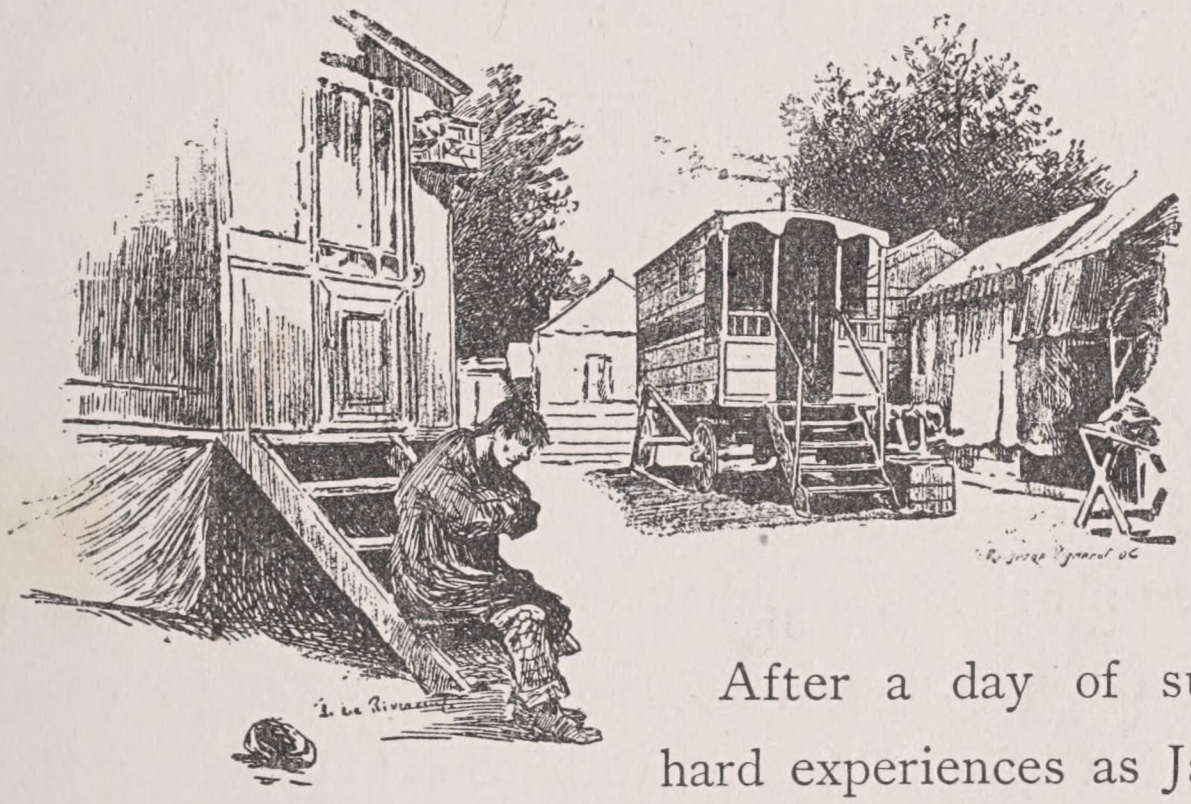
strong men, proud of their swelling biceps and their sinewy, rugged legs, wore, on the contrary, only trunks of faded pink, which had plainly been none too often to the wash. And then young girls, dressed like fairies, jumped lightly in the air under the magic rays of the electric light, danced on a rope, or simply skipped about and glittered like fire-flies as they set a-quiver the gauze of their flimsy skirts.

Midnight came, and the lamps were extinguished. The roller-coasters no longer inspired shrieks of terror. The hubbub died away. Only from time to time a maddened cornet sought to draw in the few loiterers.

The hucksters, half hidden behind their little stands of gim-cracks and ginger-bread pigs (each carefully named), shiveringly wrapped themselves in their thick coats, and with half-sleepy, half-pathetic glances solicited the patronage of departing visitors. In the larger booths, which presented so gloomy an aspect to the outsider, the exhibitions terminated in a splendor of colored lights that flashed through the chinks and crannies of the enclosure. The satiated and weary crowd melted away in little groups into the darkness.

Jack had no inclination to return again to the city;

for he felt that he no longer had any refuge there, and that his place henceforth was with these wandering showmen. He felt sure that if he were to lodge out-of-doors he could find no better place than this, where a single square tent served as a shelter for a whole family. He slipped in between two booths, and stretched his tired body on the ground.



After a day of such hard experiences as Jack had gone through, weariness is so beneficent a nurse that neither remorse nor anguish can long keep one awake, especially if one has got no further on in life than fifteen years. That benignant sleep, which pitying nature grants even to the unjust, weighed heavily on Jack's eyelids; and the lad slumbered soundly. The dream angel was kind to him, too, and filled this first night of his vagrancy with radiant falsehoods.

When he awoke at dawn, he rubbed his eyes in surprise, and asked himself where he was, astonished at not finding himself in bed in the room over the workshop with his comrades. Then consciousness of the cruel reality arose within him, and he shivered to the very marrow of his bones.

"Yes," he said, "yes; I am a thief." A monstrous interrogation point seemed to rise before him. "I am a thief," he repeated; "what's to become of me?"

He sat there, with folded arms and bent head, his glance riveted upon the ground, meditating as he had never meditated before. Experience may, in a single night, transform a child into a man. He felt a touch upon his shoulder and shuddered. One shudders often when conscience is uneasy.

"I'm taken," he said to himself; not daring to turn for fear of seeing a policeman's helmet.

But he was not taken; instead of a policeman's warning, the touch upon his shoulder was that of a lad of about his own age.

"Don't you know me?"

"No," said Jack.

"Why, see here, I'm Ernest of the Ambigu. Don't you remember? We were in the play together."

"Ah, yes," said Jack, rejoiced to meet with somebody he knew. "Yes; what a time that was!"

"What are you doing here?"

"Nothing."

"Why are you here, at the fair, at this time of day? Are you out of work?"

"Yes; I couldn't agree with the boss; I handed in my resignation; and here I am."

"Well, what now? You'll have to eat."

"Had something to eat yesterday."

"What about to-day?"

"Perhaps I'll go without to-day."

"And to-morrow?"

"Perhaps to-morrow will be like to-day."

"Well, you'll get fat if you go on that way."

"Sure; but if I find anything to eat, I'll eat it fast enough."

"You can't get anything to eat unless you work."

"Oh, I'll work."

"What at?"

"Don't know. What do you do?"

"Oh, I," responded Ernest, — "I'm one of the premiers in Ribetti's troupe. I have a splendid part in 'The Caves of Delhi; or, Conscience and Treason,'— a grand spectacular drama in twenty-six tableaux, with a

big finale, Bengal lights, and stage thunder; and the whole business only lasts fifteen minutes."

"Well, you have got a soft thing!"

Ernest did not deny the accusation. With a swagger he said, "Ah, my dear fellow, when one has talent, you know! You see, I've found my vocation. I was born an artist."

"Like me," responded Jack.

Ernest was vexed to think that another should venture to compare himself with him. He smiled ironically. Ernest's irony was something wonderful.

"Can't you get me a place with your troupe?" asked Jack.

Ernest was not sorry to have a chance to take him down a little. "What could you do? Supe? We've got all we can handle now; there are seven in the assaulting army."

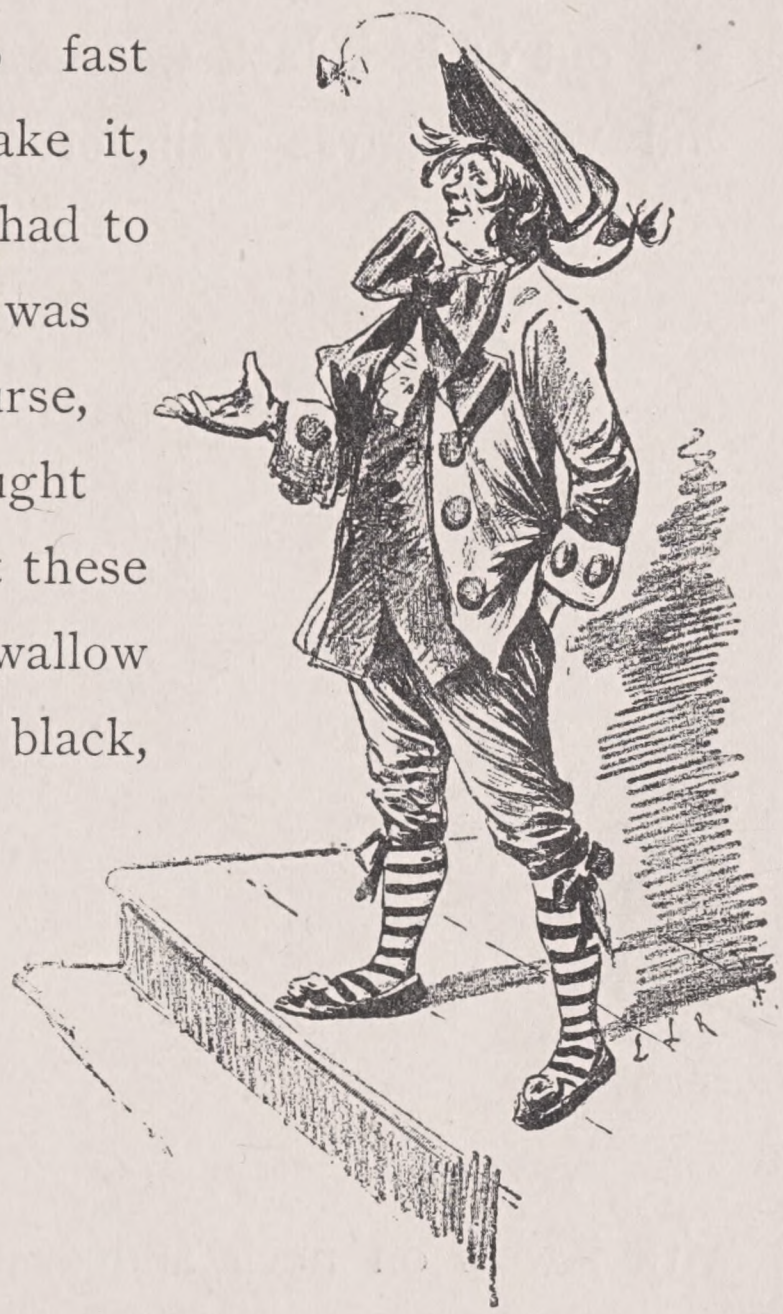
"One more wouldn't make much difference in an army. What do you say?"

"No use. We don't run things like the Paris theatres. The accessories count for very little; all depends on the actors. But I've thought of something. How would you like to do the savage? You say you're hungry?"

"Yes; I have got something of an appetite."

"That would give you a good chance to eat all you wanted. They'd be pitching fodder at you all day."

"Savage?" ventured Jack. "I don't know that that is exactly in my line."



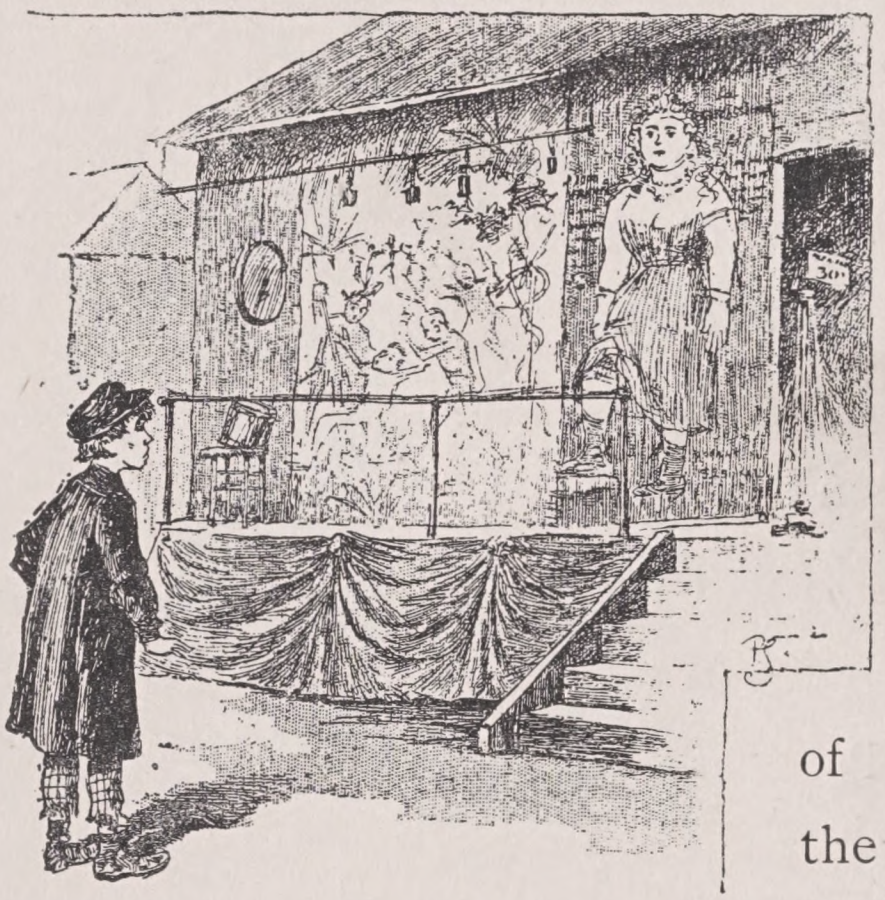
"You'll pick it up fast enough. Why, plague take it, the other day some one had to do the educated seal. It was done all right; only, of course, between ourselves, we ought to have had a negro. But these country people will swallow anything. If he wasn't black, it was easy enough to make him so."

Jack, poor chap, who had not been altogether successful as a representative of civilization, consented to take the part of the savage, and to do it as well as he could.

"I'll be glad to try it," he said; for he was very hungry.

"Come on, then."

Ernest guided his companion to the booth of which he had spoken. It was one of the last in the line. At this early hour of the morning it was closed. While Ernest went to find out if old Grigou, the proprietor, was out of bed, Jack was at liberty to study the soiled and worn canvas walls of the structure, on which a painter, with very elementary ideas as to art, had undertaken to represent, in a primitive way, some hint of the attractions within.



First, at the right of the spectator, was the outline of a colossal figure, liberally provided with jewels on neck and arms, and wearing diamonds as big as eggs in her hair. This, it appeared, was a portrait of that famous Circassian beauty, the imposing Nina, whose amplitude of charm had astonished all the courts of all the sovereigns of Europe. The central and largest panel depicted a band of Indian or African savages — the painter was a little uncer-

tain in his ethnology — in the act of attacking an explorer. The European defended himself courageously against his enemies who had the rudeness to be scalping him alive. In the background, one might see naked children of the wilds dancing madly around a spluttering roast; the roast was a second white explorer, done just to a turn.

The third and left-hand panel undoubtedly represented something; but with the best intention in the world it was impossible for one to determine exactly what.

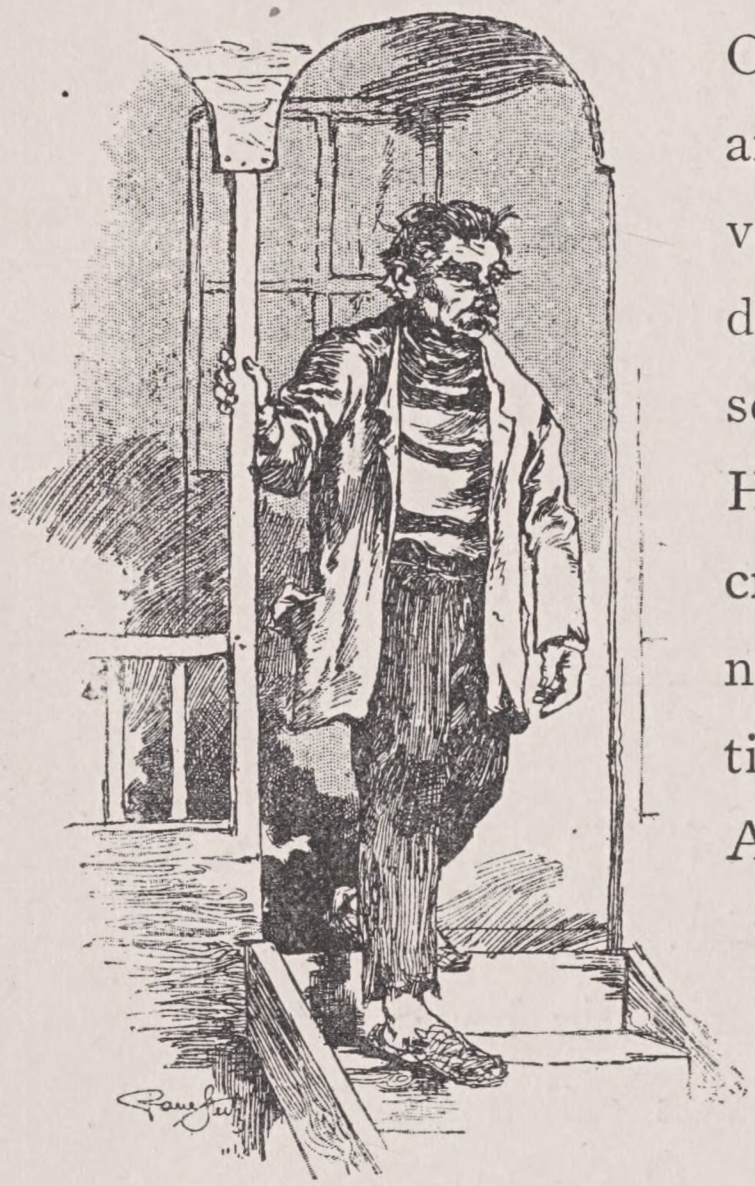
The booth was lit up at night with the ruddy, smoky glare of a lot of dirty lamps, suspended from an iron bar.

Like the snail, the owner of this establishment carried his house about with him. Old Grigou slept in a wagon which looked like a little house on wheels, and which for that reason was called a house-wagon. Ernest climbed up the steps which gave access to this vehicle, and tapped on the glass of a tiny window.

"Who's there?" demanded a deep, husky voice.

"Come out and have a drop," said Ernest. That was his method of establishing friendly relations. He waited a few minutes, and the door swung outwards and revealed a rough-looking man, with bare feet thrust

into ragged slippers, with tattered trousers tied up with string, no shirt, and a sort of sack coat of indefinable color, which had perhaps possessed a collar and buttons in its youth, but which now retained not the least trace of these departed glories. Old Grigou was quite gray; and his abundant hair, never very carefully combed even during the day, was much less so at this ungracious hour. His face, deeply tanned, and crossed and recrossed with numberless wrinkles, had the tint of a well-baked brick. As for his nose, which thrust itself prominently beyond the surrounding features, it had a shade resembling scarlet turning on the violet, somewhat after the appearance of a ripe tomato.



"What's up?" he grumbled. "You pay the score?"

"Of course," responded Ernest.

The old fellow smacked his lips with delight; and a flash of intelligence shot forth from his little gray, rat-

like and blinking eyes, that seemed to shrink from the light.

"All right; I'm with you. Where shall we go?"

Jack stood at a distance, examining with disgust the man whom destiny had appointed to become his new master.

"Well," said the man, "let's be getting along. I've got a big thirst on me this morning." It was evidently no rare thing for old Grigou to be thirsty.

"Same here," said a tipsy voice from the doorway; "don't you count me in?"

"Why, of course, old girl," said Ernest; "come on! It's my treat."

A dame of considerable importance, judging from her size,— perhaps she was the heroine of the painted sign,— now made her appearance, the whole house-wagon shaking at her every movement, while the steps groaned under her weight as she made her way to the

ground. Her hair hung upon her shoulders, her arms rested akimbo on her hips, her chin was adorned with an incipient beard. Jack noticed that when she had need of a handkerchief she got along very comfortably by using the back of her hand.

"Here, jeweller's boy, give over your staring, and come here and let's have a look at you, if you really want a place."

The affair was arranged in front of the zinc counter of a neighboring wine-shop.

"This is the chap you want to do the savage," said Ernest. "He's bright; he's played with me; I know him well. You can depend on him."

Old Grigou looked him over with a suspicious eye. The woman glanced at his clothes, for he was neatly dressed, and thought to herself that, as an applicant for such a place, he was amazingly got up.

"So you want to do the savage?" said old Grigou.

"Yes," said Jack; "I'd like it first rate."

"Well, it's not a very swell part, you understand; you'll have to take it as it comes."

"I understand that, sir."

"You can call me boss. I'm the boss, and missus, here, she's the bossess."

"Yes, boss."

"Are you down on your luck, that you want to do the savage?"

"Well, you see, boss, my father and mother are dead, and I haven't any place."

"Somebody looks after you evidently; you're rigged up like a prince."

"Yes; at Mr. Dupont's they — but I left there" —

"There, there! Never mind. You needn't tell your story; it's all the same to me."

"Why, yes, it's all the same to us," chimed in the woman.

"What are you bringing your tongue in for?" said Grigou; "keep quiet, or I'll cuff your ears for you."

"Charming family," thought Jack; "what a delightful home I shall have!"

The showman went on: "As you recommend him, Ernest, I'll hire him. We'll call it settled, then. You'll begin at once. Bestir yourself. This is Sunday, and a fine day; there'll be a crowd. We don't have any loafing here when business is on."

Jack left his companion with an assumed air of satisfaction. "Oh, it's easy enough," said he. "And then this sort of life will suit me."

When he got back to the van he found that Ma'am

Grigou had lighted a fire under a big kettle, and was picking out some potatoes.

"That's encouraging," he said to himself; "they feed themselves, it seems; and judging by the size of the cook we ought not to be skimped on our rations."

"I'll show you where you're to sleep," said the boss. He took the lad inside. It was dark and close. He pointed to a big box. "In there."

"In there?" repeated Jack dumfounded. "But it's too small. I couldn't get in there. My legs would be outside."

"If you like, we can cut 'em off."

Jack made no reply to this. "He'd be quite capable of cutting them off," he thought; "I'd better be contented with the box."

"Follow me," said the showman roughly, "and I'll show you what you are to do."

He took him to what is called the "saloon," and commanded him to disrobe. Jack took off his blouse and his vest; then he paused. The showman signified that he was to remove his shoes and stockings and his breeches. Jack stood in his shirt.

"I told you to undress," said the showman.

"Well, I have."

"Not as long as you keep your shirt on."

"What, must I take my shirt off too?"

"Did you ever hear of a savage that wore any?"

It was impossible to reply to that argument. Jack obeyed. He asked himself if by any chance they were going to show him in that guise to the public. The showman held out a pair of short, black drawers.

"Put those on."

This done, old Grigou led the boy into the light, and smeared him all over — body, arms, legs, and face — with some sort of sticky paste. Jack began to be alarmed, and said to himself, "Oh, dear! What'll he do next?"

When the paste had been applied to the satisfaction of old Grigou, he called to his wife for "the bag." She brought the bag, and dropped it at the feet of the bewildered Jack. The bag was filled with feathers. Old Grigou emptied its contents on the ground. This done, he said, —

"Now get down and roll."

Jack rolled. The feathers flew about like moths, and stuck fast to his body. When Jack got up he looked very much like a feather duster. Old Grigou then fastened around his body a sort of short skirt made of long, thick feathers.

But this was not all; the finishing touches were yet to be applied. With grease paint, old Grigou smeared over those portions of arms, legs, and face where the feathers had not caught. Then he took a curly black wig, surmounted by three ostrich plumes, and put it on his head, and adorned his ears and nose with large rings, which Jack could remove and replace at pleasure. The transformation completed, the lad was con-

ducted to a looking-glass. "There!" Jack had some difficulty in realizing that the figure he saw reflected there was his own.

"That can't be me," said he; "it's somebody else. You've got a savage somewhere in the establishment and you've put him in my place."

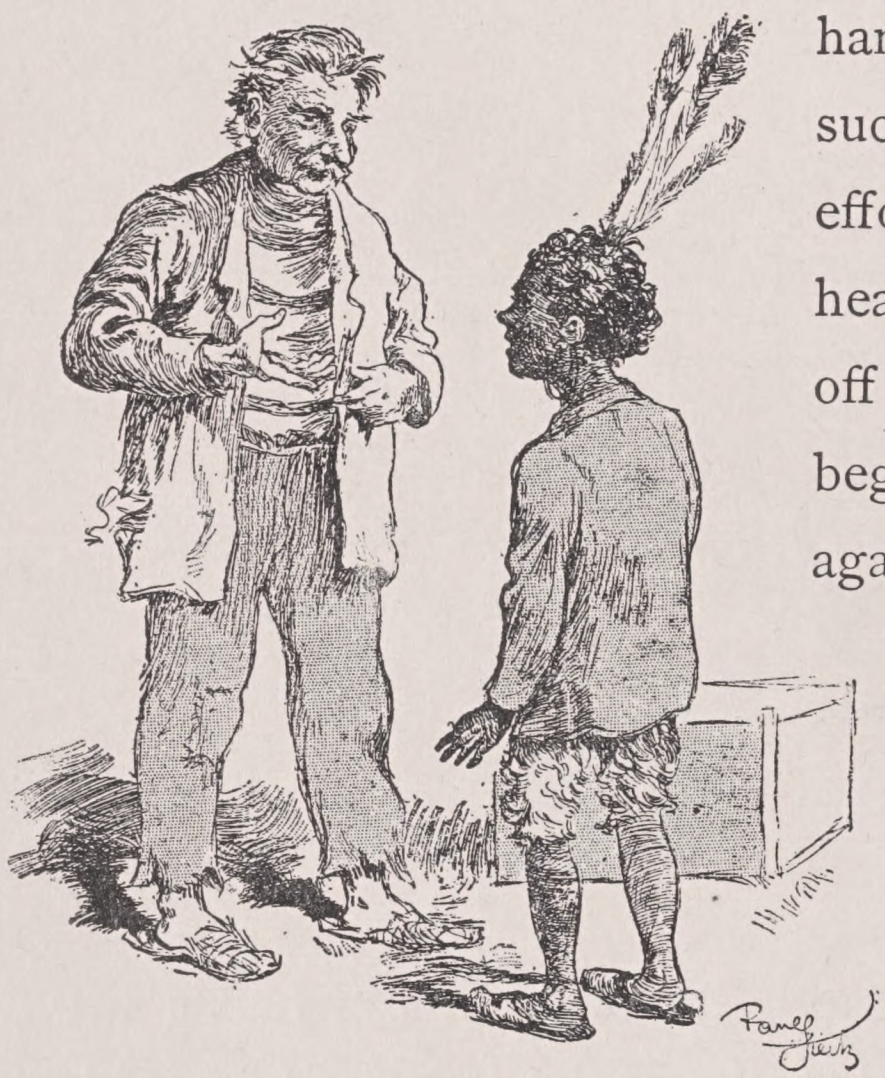
The showman was greatly flattered by Jack's artlessness. It proved that the make-up was thoroughly artistic. When Jack was finally convinced that it was his own reflection that he saw, his spirits rose at a bound.

"There's one comfort about it, after all," he said. "Nobody can possibly recognize me."

Old Grigou called his wife, that she might admire

his new savage, recently arrived from the isles of the ocean. She said with great simplicity, —

"When you can make savages as good as that, it's not worth while trying to get real ones, for the real ones don't begin to look nearly as savage."



Old Grigou rubbed his hands. It was clear that success had crowned his efforts. "Now for a rehearsal," he said. "Take off that vest" (Jack had begun to dress himself again). "What's your name?"

"Jack."

"Jack nothing! Your name's Pipirikiki; you came from one of the islands of the Southern Ocean; you were captured by a company of daring explorers; you are a cannibal, and you eat white flesh with voracity; in default of your favorite diet, you content yourself with uncooked food. That's your place. You fasten yourself to that chain. The audience comes in. You grind

your teeth; you roll your eyes; you act as if you were going to eat the whole crowd. I calm you down, and order you to dance one of your native dances. Then you dance, like this" (the showman danced), "uttering frightful cries" (the showman uttered frightful cries). "Now try it."

Jack tried it. He had the ideas all right, but he was too mild; he lacked ferocity.

"See here," said the showman; "just imagine that you see victuals before you, and that you're dying of hunger."

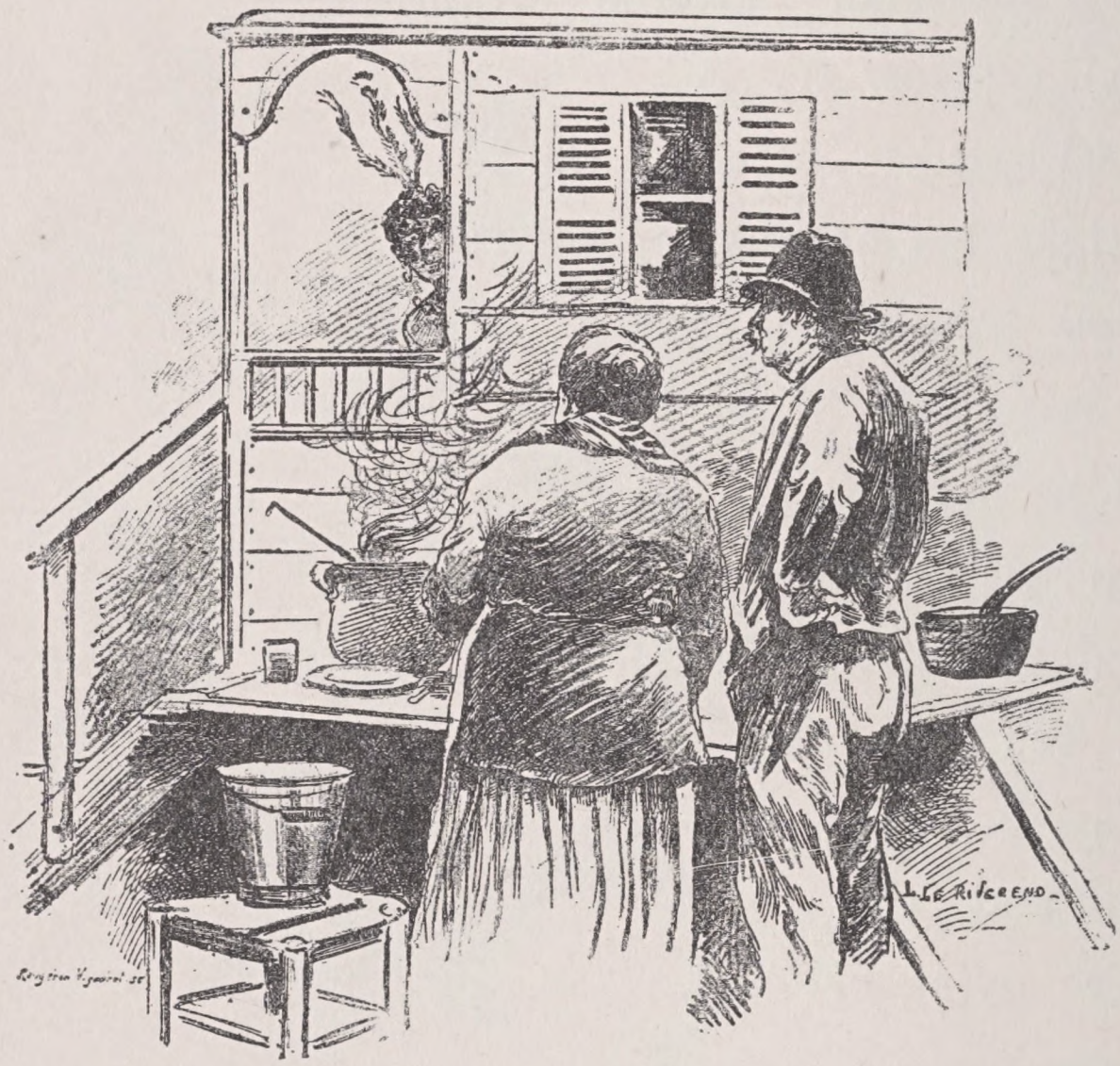
"Oh, yes," said Jack; "I can easily imagine that!" He tried again.

"That's better," said the boss; "here, catch!" He threw a piece of bloody meat.

"There, gnaw that; but be careful not to eat it.

You must make believe, for that piece will have to last all day."

"What! Put that nasty thing in my mouth?" exclaimed Jack, with an air of profound disgust. The boss lifted his stick.



"Are you my savage, or are you not?"

With a sinking heart Jack submitted. Oh, how hard it was! Tears came into his eyes.

"Now, look here," said old Grigou; "don't you go to snivelling. I sent the last one away because he blubbered. When the tears run down your cheek,

they wash off the paint, and the people can see the white streaks."

In spite of this warning, Jack was on the point of bursting into tears; he couldn't keep back the sobs; but, fortunately, Ma'am Grigou came at that moment, and called him to breakfast. The prospect of assuaging his hunger consoled him. He saw the table all set out of doors; but to his great surprise there were only two plates, — one for old Grigou, the other for his wife. It seemed that they didn't want him to show himself in his diguise, and wanted him to eat inside the van. They brought him his meagre portion. Jack sighed.

"This isn't quite equal," he thought, "to Mother Bonnet's savory stews."

But he was hungry, — so hungry that he ate with a relish what at another time he would have been scarcely able to swallow. He ate abstractedly, with his nose to his plate, and reaching out for his bread found that it had disappeared; and yet he felt very sure that he had not eaten it. He looked all around but could not find it. While he was looking for the bread, the food on his plate also vanished.

"Oh, this is too much!" he cried; "there must be a thief here!"

His words came echoing back to him, and he flushed

beneath his paint. Yes; there was a thief in the van, — Jack knew that only too well.

He was still puzzling over the disappearance of his breakfast, when from behind a large curtain he heard a

snuffling sound. He turned and looked. It was Zany, the monkey. Zany was eating Jack's bread and meat, and regarded this method of making acquaintance with the new-comer as a great joke. There would have been an exchange of hostilities if old Grigou had not appeared, and given orders for the show to begin.

Jack was sent behind the scenes and told to wait for his cue. It was dark and close in there; and he seated himself on a stool, waiting for the word from the boss which was to summon him forth before the eyes of the astonished audience. Ah, you may be sure, Jack was not enjoying himself; but in the course of his reflections he did not fail to realize fully the bitter import of his experience. Seated there, alone with his conscience, he could perceive a meaning which had escaped him in the incidents of his past life; and more than once the eternal cry of erring humanity was on his lips: "Oh, if I had only known!"

When his mind was weary of self-accusation, he confronted his present situation; and his heart was filled with deep regret. He longed for the workshop, back in Moon Street; the wholesome atmosphere of probity and candor; the regular life; the settled tasks; Mother Bonnet's kindness; the companionship of John and Johnnie; even the brusque good will of Mr. Griffin.

He longed, too, for Bisquine. Poor Bisquine! If only she were there, she would console him. She would look at him with her great, loving, truthful eyes; she would sleep at his feet; she would cover him with caresses; and as she licked his hands would try to say, "You know I am your little friend, who will love you

always, whatever you may do, for you saved me when I was hurt and miserable; and kindness, even if only shown to dogs, is something that in this world is never lost!"

But not even Bisquine had followed the wanderer. He was alone upon the earth, without even a dog to call his friend, and was himself like a dog without friends. He dreaded the call to go on the stage. One may be very well disguised, but there's not much fun in playing the savage for the first time before a crowd of people.

Through the peek-hole, Jack saw that the booth had been opened, and that the audience was gathering. He gazed in fascination. The crowd pressed close against the railing, — a noisy expanse of grinning heads, with open mouths, eager eyes, and alert ears. The small boys in the foreground elbowed one another, and grabbed each other by the neck. Half-grown girls lifted younger children above the level of the crowd, that they might see what was going on; and in their amazement at the scene these little ones even forgot to suck their thumbs. It was a miscellaneous assemblage, made up of men in uniform and men in black coats, workmen in their blouses, middle-class citizens out for a holiday, — people of all sorts and conditions, a medley of types, squeezed close together in seried ranks, only

their heads showing, like a vast array of sculptured and hilarious vegetables. Old Grigou began his address: —

"Ladies and gentlemen, we have within here a specimen very well worth his weight in gold. He's a very dangerous native from the countries of the Southern Ocean. He was captured by a band of French soldiers" (here old Grigou raised his hat). "He was brought to France; and before they sent him on his way to his final destination, of which I shall keep the secret carefully, he was engaged by me, and is now devotedly attached to my service. He's a cannibal of the worst kind, and he'll eat a raw chicken at a gulp. They said to me: 'You'll find it cheaper to kill him than to try to feed him!' Kill him? What did they take me for, ladies and gentlemen? I'm no savage, — not I. I've fed him, and brought him up;

but you may believe it has cost me a pretty penny to do so. Under my supervision he will now have the honor of executing before you one of the native dances of his own country, and of chanting in his native jargon a sentimental ballad. You will also be permitted to witness his feeding; but I do not give him human flesh, for that is forbidden by the authorities, for whom I have the greatest respect" (he once more lifted his hat).

"How is it," you will ask me, "that you show for the benefit of the public a freak that has not its like in any civilized land? Ladies and gentlemen, this scientific, entertaining, geographical, and unique spectacle has been devised for the purpose of instructing and amusing the whole people. Rich and poor can profit by it. Formerly I always charged two francs admission, and I refused to let in anybody for less. To-day I shall make an exception, and you will all be welcome. I shall not charge twenty sous, ladies and gentlemen, or even ten sous; it will be six sous for the best places, and three sous for the others. Step up and get your tickets. The show is about to begin. You don't have to pay until you go out, and not then if you ain't satisfied. Children half price, and also all military gentlemen, except marshals of France, who always pay full rates."

A drum rolled furiously. Perpetuity, — that was Ma'am Grigou's given name, — beat on a gong. Bang! Bang! Bang! The showman set a bell swinging. Never did such a horrible racket assail the human ear;

but this diabolical symphony attracted the loiterers to the booth, which was soon filled. Every place was taken. The difference between the first places and the second was that those who took first places had something or other to sit on, while those who took second had nothing at all.

"Attention! We are going to begin."

Old Grigou, armed with a whip and with a stern and formidable air, called out: "Here, Pipirikiki!" A noise of chains was heard, and the ferocious exile from the Southern Ocean leaped upon the stage, amid a great sensation.

"Oh, what a monster!" exclaimed a pretty young girl.

"Let's go away, mamma," said a little boy; "I'm afraid."

Jack heard these speeches, and thought to himself, —

"What have I come to? Young ladies call me a monster, and little boys are afraid of me!"

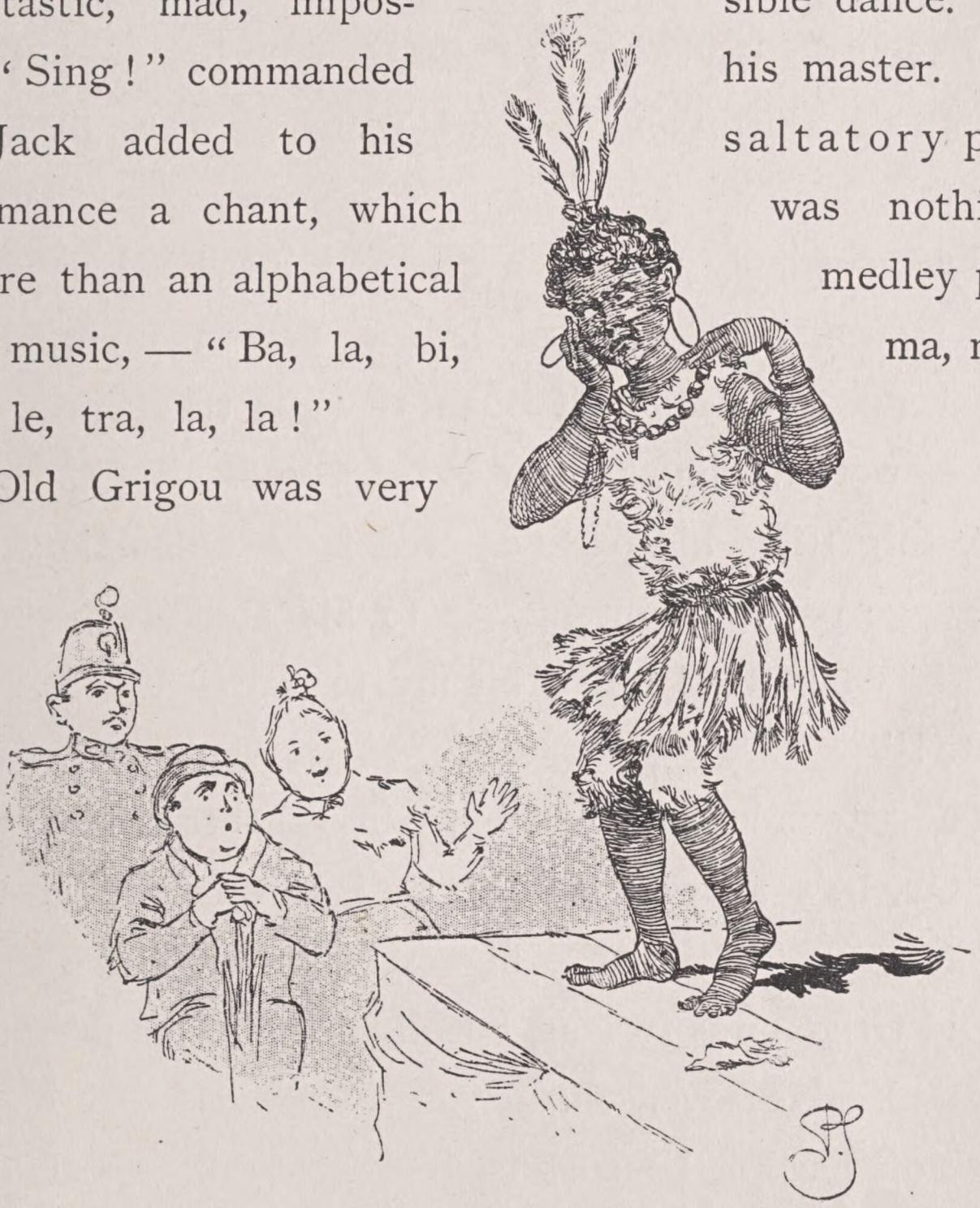
"Dance!" shouted old Grigou.

And Jack danced, without manner or method, dizzy at so many turnings about, and with closed eyes, — a fantastic, mad, impossible dance.

"Sing!" commanded his master.

Jack added to his saltatory performance a chant, which was nothing more than an alphabetical medley put to music, — "Ba, la, bi, ma, ma, lu, le, tra, la, la!"

Old Grigou was very



well satisfied with his savage. He did the part well; and the showman had never had any one so docile, and who so readily understood the part at the first trial. Evidently Jack had found his vocation. He

displayed astonishing ferocity when it came to gnawing the piece of raw meat.

"Look, ladies and gentleman! How's that for an appetite?"

The little boy who was afraid, now hid behind his mamma's skirts and peeped with one eye, all in a tremble.

Jack suddenly uttered a cry, and lifted his hand to his mouth. He writhed like a person undergoing great agony. The showman thought that these grimaces were assumed, and was overjoyed. But the savage, forgetting his part, entered into explanations, in language perfectly intelligible to his auditors, — "Oh dear! Oh! Oh! I've bit my tongue — Oh, how it hurts!"

The astounded audience burst into shouts of laughter.

"Oh, he's a sweet savage, he is!" said one of the spectators. "That's the biggest fake out!"

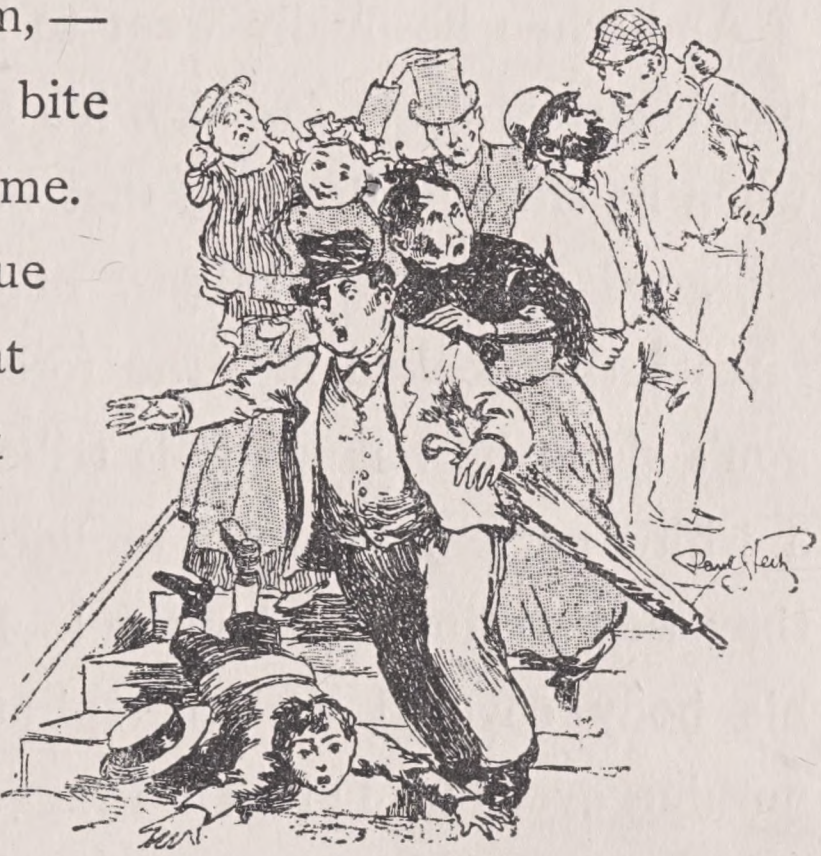
Old Grigou was furious, but did not lose his presence of mind. He saved the day.

"You needn't be surprised to hear him speak our language," said the showman. "I've *learned* him."

But the audience continued to laugh. They had been told at the door that they needn't pay till they went out, and not then if they weren't satisfied.

"This show doesn't suit me," said one; "I sha'n't pay."

Disturbance and various disputes followed, and the receipts fell off considerably. When the booth was empty, old Grigou, armed with a strap, went up to his savage. "So you bit your tongue, did you, you scallywag! I'll teach you!" And he taught him, — taught him not to bite his tongue another time.



"I'll cut your tongue out if you play that trick again. You talk savage talk here."

"Ba, be, bi, — sa, se, si, — ki, ka, ko," responded poor Jack, summoning up a pitiful smile.

"I see you understand me; don't forget."

They gave the second exhibition. Jack came on, as he had come on before, danced the same dance, sang the same song, and gnawed the same piece of meat; but if he bit his tongue this time he omitted to say anything about it.

When, by eleven o'clock, the great hinged screen was swung over from the top of the booth and the last lamp had expired in malodorous despair, Jack had so often appeared before an intelligent and distinguished audience, that he began to feel rather uncertain as to whether or no he was not actually the savage they took him for.

And when he finally went to bed in the kennel that had been set aside for him, his sleep was broken; and when he slept he dreamed that he had become a savage for good and all. He saw himself roaming through forests that looked like the forest painted on old Grigou's sign; he was with his tribe, and they were eating a white person. Horror of horrors, the white person they were eating was himself! He awoke with a start, his body covered with perspiration, although he had nothing over him but a thin ragged blanket.

"Nonsense," he said to himself, "it was nothing but a nightmare. I'm nothing but a play savage, — a savage to laugh at." And, in the darkness and silence, the savage, who was a savage to laugh at, sobbed and sobbed and sobbed.

For seven days, that seemed like seven years or seven centuries, Jack led this deplorable existence. He had thought more than once of running away. But how? And whither?

Run away? He was covered with feathers, and daubed with black paint. When the police saw him they wouldn't be long in taking him into custody and to the station-house. There they would ask his name, and where he lived. He would be obliged to say, — "My name's Jack. I was apprentice at Mr. Dupont's, the jeweller's. I left there, because — well, because I stole." When you tell the police that you have been stealing, they don't let you go in a hurry. They wouldn't let him go.

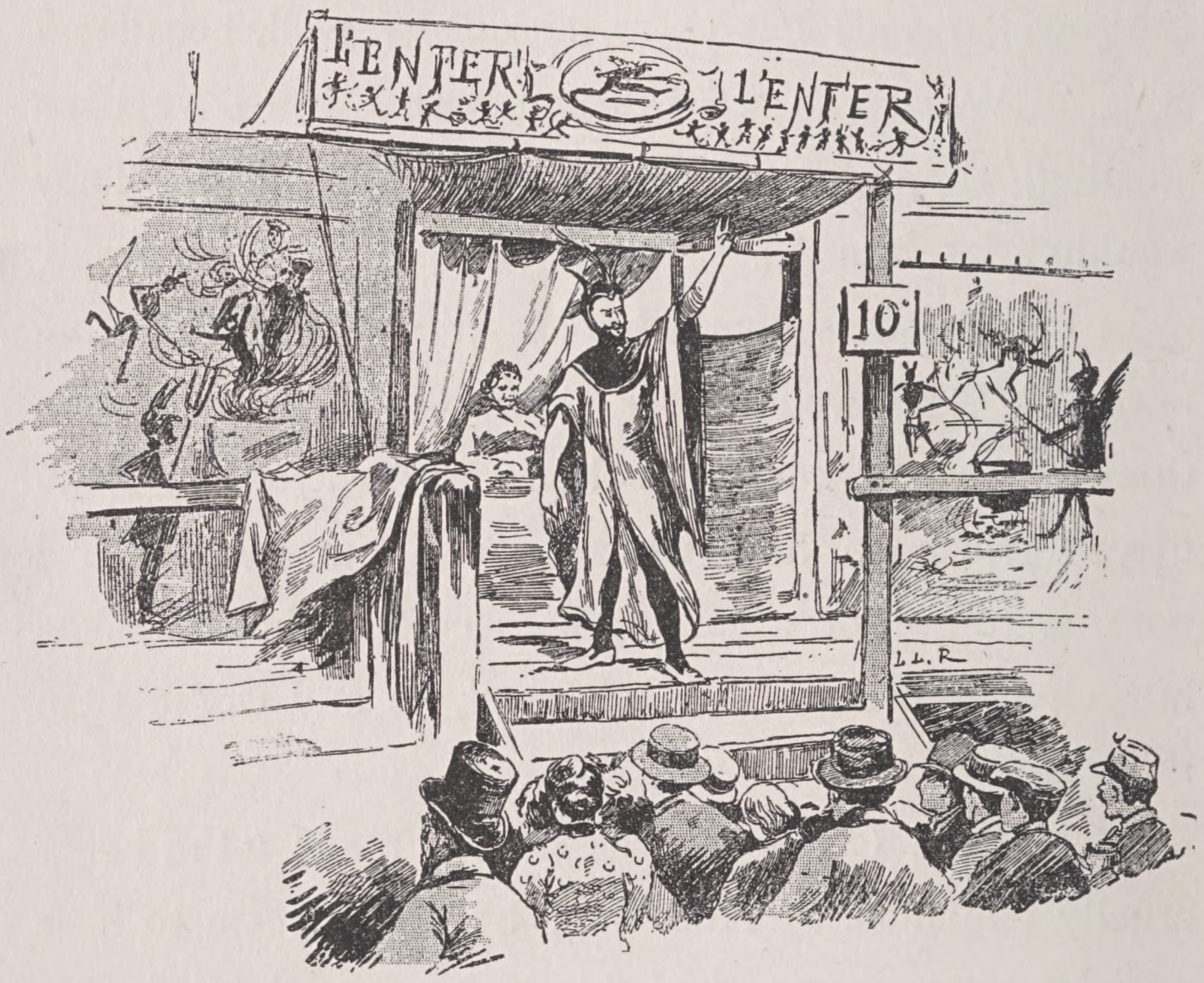
In old Grigou's booth, he was at any rate safe from pursuit. Who would ever think of looking for him there? But in hours of discouragement, when Zany played tricks on him, when he was hungry and had nothing to eat, or when the boss cuffed him, he asked himself if a prison could, after all, be any worse than this.

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" he would groan; "I'm being cruelly punished." And then he would seem to hear a voice from some invisible source replying, "No more so than you deserve, Jack."

Then he bowed his head; or in another mood, for the spirit of revolt was not yet dead within him, he burned with rage. He refused to yield, and cried aloud, "I won't give in! I won't give in!" The

struggle between good and evil still went on within him; and too often, alas, it was not the good that triumphed.

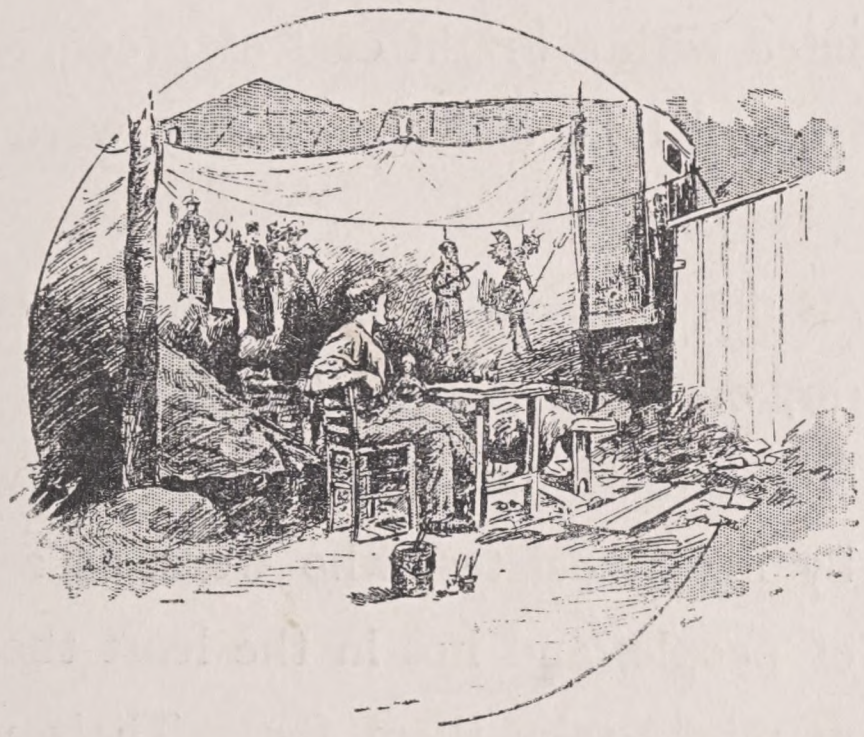
Lucifer was old Grigou's neighbor. Lucifer, at the gingerbread fair, was a very good sort of man, who had



gone through a great many adventures before he came to take charge of the Inferno. The Inferno was in Lucifer's booth. Garbed in red, bearded and horned, he explained to all comers where their sins, if they did not have a care, would eventually bring them. He

might have added that the way thither is along many an apparently harmless and unsuspected road.

Lucifer had puppets to represent men, and the representation was a very good one. Men or puppets, it amounts very much to the same thing. Later on you will realize this. Any spectacle is edifying that teaches us to examine ourselves, even though we laugh



as we learn. A moral that comes to us in attractive guise finds its own way to our hearts. Think of this, dear reader, and you will understand what I am trying to do in writing this book.

On this particular morning, Lucifer had put off his splendid costume, and, with no more horns than you or I have, was smoking his pipe, and presiding at the toilet of his puppets. He put the seven cardinal sins to

rights, adding a touch of scarlet to Pride, a little white to the hateful pallor of Envy, touched up the lips of Gluttony, closed the eyes of Sloth, and lighted a flame in the eyes of Anger; he also sharpened the nails of Avarice, brightened up the caldron wherein the wicked were a-stewing, and regilded the pitchfork with which the victims of wrath were collected. The legion of little imps, who were the cooks of this infernal kitchen, he rejuvenated with a bright coat of green, and he saw that their forked tails and cloven feet were in proper condition.

There was not in the whole fair a more peaceful man than Lucifer, or "Old Scratch" as he was familiarly called, on account of his occupation. He was highly esteemed by his associates, who were, as a rule, very good sort of people, and not in the least the hardened outlaws you might take them for. Their ways, it is true, are different from ours; they lead a wandering life, and their caravans often rest in the shade of the woods, and little children are frightened when they see them go by with their houses on wheels. It is only custom, however, that separates them from the rest of mankind. In fact, there are no people condemned to a hard and cheerless life who more truly merit our esteem and sympathy.

"There are no foolish trades," says the proverb; "there are only foolish people." A father may very well decide that, among the many occupations to be chosen, he would not select that of mountebank for his son. Ordinarily — Jack is a good example — people adopt this calling only through force of circumstances; but, such as it is, it responds to a certain need. When the play begins, we are very well content to see the strolling actors come upon the mimic stage, and to enjoy the sport, the pleasure, and the distraction that they afford us. We only pass our condemnation upon the real existence of these people; and then only because their way of living is so different from ours.

Old Grigou did not stand very high in the estimation of his companions, because of his rough manners, his fondness for drink, and his severity towards his dependents. Between him and Lucifer no love was lost. How happened it that on this particular day they actually got into a quarrel? The origin of the dispute has never been clearly determined. All that is known is that Lucifer, engaged in fixing up Hope, — one of the three theological graces, — had hung up her wardrobe on a cord stretched from one tree to another; the wardrobe consisted of a sky-blue gown of crepon, and a piece of gilt stuff which she wore on her head like a diadem.

"Silly business," said old Grigou, "a man of your age playing with dolls!"

"Sneer if you like, neighbor," responded Lucifer; "I'm not playing with dolls. I'm arranging my little company for this evening's show. My puppets earn my bread for me as your savages do yours for you. Look out! You almost stepped on Charity, and she's rather a frail sort of creature."

"You ought to leave that sort of thing to nurse-girls. Your fingers are too clumsy to swaddle kids!"

"That needn't worry you any. It's my business, not yours. There's one thing sure, Grigou; my wooden puppets are decent sort of people. I know where they come from. I carved them myself from the trunk of a pear-tree. Perhaps you wouldn't find it so easy to give the home address of the poor lads you paste over with glue and feathers and hold as prisoners."

"They have their liberty."

"Yes, liberty. Tell that to those who will believe you. Do you think I don't know what's going on around here? But, there, thank Heaven, I'm not an informant; otherwise the commissary of police might make you a call, at my suggestion, and ask you why, night and day, people hear the sobs of an unhappy child that you have transformed into a black man. Do

you think that I don't see, and that I can't hear? There's something wrong. Take care. I may be too big to play with dolls, but I'm big enough to have my eyes open."

"That's all right," said old Grigou, calming down a little. "That's all right. I amuse the crowd, and that makes you mad. I don't pretend to be a saint; but there's nothing very bad that goes on around my place."

Lucifer was very intent with fixing his puppets, and did not lift his head or make any response. His silence irritated the exploiter of savages, who had begun to get disturbed over certain speeches that had come to his ears. It would be very easy to get him into trouble. This lad he had got into his power came from he knew not where, and must have somebody who was interested in him; and if the police got hold of the affair, Grigou knew that he might be punished for abduction. What a fool he had been, to make fun of his neighbor's puppets! He tried to atone for any bad effect his words might have had.

"Let's be serious now, and go and have a drink."

"Thanks," drawled the master of the Inferno. "When you're young enough to play with dolls, you don't go to the wine-shop."

Grigou humbled himself still more, and tried to make explanations. They ought not to judge him by appearances. The child was with him of his own free will.

"Why does he cry so much?" asked Lucifer.

"How do I know? At that age they cry for nothing. But I'll make a bet with you. I'll bet he'll tell you himself he came to me of his own free will, and that he likes the place."

Lucifer got up. "I'll take you," he said. "But you mustn't coach him beforehand. Call him here; and

when he comes I'll question him, and we'll see what he says."

Old Grigou bit his lips. "Oh, ho!" said Lucifer ironically. "You hesitate. Perhaps you don't dare try it?"

Old Grigou thought to himself, "The boy will never reveal the secret of his past life. I sha'n't be risking anything." He lifted his hand to his mouth, and called out, —

"Hey there, savage!"

"Here I am, boss."

"Come here."

Jack made his appearance, a grimy picture of sordid misery. Lucifer murmured, "The child does little credit to his nurse. Poor lad, poor lad!"

Jack's heart was touched with the warmth of Lucifer's compassion. Oh, the worthy man, to speak with so much pity of one he did not know!

"But," thought Jack, "perhaps it's because he doesn't know me. If he knew," —

"Now, then," demanded Grigou, "no evasions. Speak the truth. Did you come to me of your own free will? Yes, or no?"

"Yes."

Old Grigou turned toward Lucifer, and made a

gesture which signified, "You see; it's just as I told you."

Lucifer asked a question. "It's not a very amusing trade that you've taken up. Why do you do it?"

Jack came near telling him that it was because he had stolen, and wanted to escape the police. He told a lie instead.

"I do it because I like to. I like this life; I like to do the savage."

Old Grigou rubbed his hands together with glee. "Good enough; well said!" Lucifer eyed the lad suspiciously, knowing that there was something behind all this.

"Why is it, then," he asked, "that you cry so much?"

"Why do I cry?" asked Jack. "Why do I cry? But I don't cry!" and he held back the tears that were coming into his eyes.

"I've heard you sobbing."

"If I cry, it must be without knowing it."

"Neighbor," said Lucifer, "you're right; and I was unjust to suspect you. Let's say no more about it. Go back with your savage, and leave me to my imps of darkness. It's nearly show-time, and I must start the fire under the caldron." And in Jack's ear he whis-

pered, "When you have found out why you cry, come and let me know."

"Come on, savage," said old Grigou. "Sure enough, it's getting late, and the exhibition must begin. We must make ready; and in a hurry too."

Perpetuity was waiting outside. "Lively, you rascal," she said to Jack, taking him by the ear; "go and put on your wig." She saw by the way in which old Grigou wore his hat that he was out of sorts.

"Something's gone wrong, Grigou."

"Yes; our good neighbor Lucifer, who ought to be stewing in his own caldron, has been putting his nose into our affairs. We patched up the quarrel; but I don't feel easy about it, all the same. He wants to know where Jack came from. It would be bad for us if he gave the tip to the police."

"What's that you say? For gracious sake! The police?" Ma'am Grigou stepped back so suddenly that she narrowly missed sitting down in the soup kettle.

Preparations were made as usual for the exhibition; but fortune is an inconstant wench, and all the blandishments held forth by the showman regarding the marvellous captive from the South seas had on this occasion no effect upon visitors to the Fair. In vain they thumped the tambourine; in vain they sounded the cymbals, — bang! bang! bang! In vain old Grigou shouted in stentorian tones, and lowered the price of admission to attract the crowd: "Two sous only for the best places, — two sous for everything, — what do you think of that?"

The audience consisted of only one person, — a quiet-mannered gentleman, dressed in black, wearing gloves, with a decoration in his buttonhole, who handed over his ten centimes, took a seat, and waited. Old Grigou

was greatly offended at having so small an audience, and offered to give back the money.

"Go on with the show," said the gentleman, in so imperious a tone that further argument was out of the question.

For the benefit of this one spectator, Jack went through his improvised dance and cannibalistic exercises. The stranger was imperturbable. "Who can it be?" old Grigou asked himself, puzzled over the mystery, and disturbed at the neglect of the public. The stranger seemed to understand the question that the showman wanted to ask, and said, —

"I am the commissary of police." Then he went out, after receiving a most profound and respectful salute from the proprietor of the establishment.

The commissary of police! What had he come there for? Old Grigou was very much perplexed.

XVI.

AWAY TO THE COUNTRY.

As Jack was about to go to his sleeping-place that night, old Grigou told him that he was not to make his bed in the box, but that he was to sleep in the wagon at the feet of the boss and his wife, — a distinguished honor for which Jack sought in vain to discover a reason.

They had thrown a bear-skin down on the boards, and on that several articles of clothing. "There's your bed," he was told; "lie down." He went to bed. The novelty of the situation suggested unusual thoughts; and he carefully looked about the interior of the house-wagon, somewhat impressed with the turkey-red hangings and their garnishment of tawdry, cream-colored lace. A bewildering array of knicknacks attracted his attention, and as his glance wandered idly around he beheld his own form reflected in a looking-glass. The sight overwhelmed him with a passion of self pity. "To think, only to think," he said to himself, "that

I should come to this! Where is the Jack that I used to be? Can it be that under all this paint and these feathers I am the same — just the same?"

He turned away with his face to the wall, and with his hands over his eyes.

Not far away the showman and his wife were whispering to one another. He caught but a few words of what they said, but the phrase he heard was terrifying in its brief suggestiveness: "Yes; but not till he goes to sleep."

What was it that was going to happen after he went to sleep? What purpose had old Grigou and his wife in bringing him into the house-wagon? As he meditated upon these questions, he shrank as from some unforeseen yet dreaded destiny; for experience had taught him that surprises, when they came, were not apt to be welcome.

"Oh, dear," sighed Jack; "how I wish that I could get away!"

Get away? Where to? And how? Was there anybody to whom he could appeal? Why, yes; he remembered how kindly their good neighbor, Lucifer, had spoken; what pity he had shown; how deeply moved he had been at Jack's condition; and how tenderly he had asked the cause of the lad's tears. Jack had lied to him out of fear; but the falsehood had been no deceit. He remembered the sentence that Lucifer had whispered in his ear: "When you have found out why you cry, come and let me know."

He resolved upon a course of action. Evidently deliverance lay that way. The friendly words and looks of the master of the Inferno had revealed a sympathetic heart; and Jack was in great need of finding some one in whom he could confide his repentance — was that repentance absolute? — for his evil past. Yes; the next morning, at dawn, he would slink out without being seen, visit the Inferno, — most certainly this time a place well paved with good intentions! — and confess himself to Lucifer. He would hold nothing back; and when he had told everything, perhaps his friend would help him to escape from the worser

Inferno of old Grigou's show, where for a fortnight he had been in torment.

Hope came to him and dazzled his mind with radiant fancies. Joy filled his heart, and he was comforted; for he had no doubt whatever that his good neighbor would intervene in his behalf. It was a stroke of Providence. He could not believe that he was utterly lost as long as there was some one interested in his welfare. He fell asleep, for the first time since his flight, with his fears at rest, and with a cheerful looking forward to the morrow. He was convinced that his trials were but transitory and that he would again find peace.

"To-morrow," he muttered softly, "to-morrow I shall find a friend!"

Weariness rested heavily upon him, and his sleep was sound. The hours flew by, — hours of merciful oblivion, — the hours that bring strength and courage to meet the trials of a new day.

He was awakened by a strange sensation, — the noise of a horse's hoofs striking at regular intervals on hard, firm ground. The house-wagon was in motion, and a movement of exceptional violence had aroused him from his slumber. Day was breaking; through the narrow window he caught glimpses of the fading stars and of shadowy foliage flitting by. Old Grigou's coarse voice,

accompanying the blows of a whip, urged on their lagging steed, Theodulus. Deception was impossible; they were moving along a road bordered with trees. He jumped up, and saw wide fields and stretches of

woodland. They were, — oh, heaven have mercy upon him! — they were in some unknown region, far out in the open country.

Old Grigou had become alarmed, and had unceremoniously taken leave of the Gingerbread Fair; he

was flying from the effects of indiscreet disclosures, from the threat of interference, from the ordeal of embarrassing interrogatories.

The unhappy Jack was overwhelmed with anguish. He fell back in despair on the shaking floor of the wagon. His last hope was gone. Already he must be far from the friend upon whose generous intervention he had depended. Where now was Lucifer, — kind-hearted Lucifer, — to whom he had expected to reveal his sorrow and his determination to do better?

The van went rumbling inexorably onward, in a direction away from that in which Jack had hoped for deliverance. Where were they? Where were they going? After all, what did it matter to him? Wherever they were, and wherever they were going, Jack felt that his journey was into an unknown future.

"Whoa!" shouted old Grigou. The wagon stopped. The showman appeared at the door, cracking his whip loudly. "Get up there, savage," he called; "and be lively with you!" Seeing the astonishment of the unhappy lad, he condescended to make an explanation: "I thought it would be good for you to get a sniff of fresh air. Come out and see what you think of things."

Having descended from the wagon, Jack looked about him sorrowfully. They were in the wilds.

"What place do you call this, boss?"

"This is the Hotel of All-Out-Doors, my frisky chicken. You can take your ease here, and it won't cost you anything."

Jack instinctively looked behind him in the direction whence they had come. Paris, no doubt, was off there. A stone pillar stood at the side of the road. It bore some sort of an inscription. Jack looked carefully, and saw an arrow, pointing backwards, and read: "Paris, forty-four kilomètres" (about thirty-three miles).

"My kind friend," he thought, "you are very far away. I shall never see you again. And I shall never see Mr. Griffin, — how good he was, even if he was stern! — or John and Johnnie, who were such true comrades; or Mother Bonnet with her sweets; or Mr. Minnet, the teacher, whose lessons might have been of so much use to me; or Bisquine, with her merry capers, — my dear, little, faithful, loving friend Bisquine! I'm like one of those old captives tied to a chariot; and I am on my way to places that probably John, smart as he was in geography, never heard of; for when you get thirty-three miles from Paris, you must be pretty near to the end of the world."

XVII.

THEODULUS.

THERE was a reason for their halt at Aubergines, — that was the name of the region, — rather than continuing their journey elsewhere; and this in spite of the fact that those who travel as fancy directs are not bound by any narrow limitations. That is the charm of a wandering life; the nomad is at home everywhere.

Old Grigou had chosen a propitious spot. It was far from any house; and that in itself was desirable, since he did not, as the result of his recent scare, yearn in the least for human society. The scenery was monotonous, for the country was very flat; but a clump of trees made a shady and delightfully attractive camping-place. Not far away, a brook babbled in a margin of luxuriant grass intermingled with flowers. The picturesqueness and poetry of the scene had no effect on old Grigou; but the grove gave him the seclusion which he sought, and the brook provided an ample supply of water for domestic purposes. At the very start, he

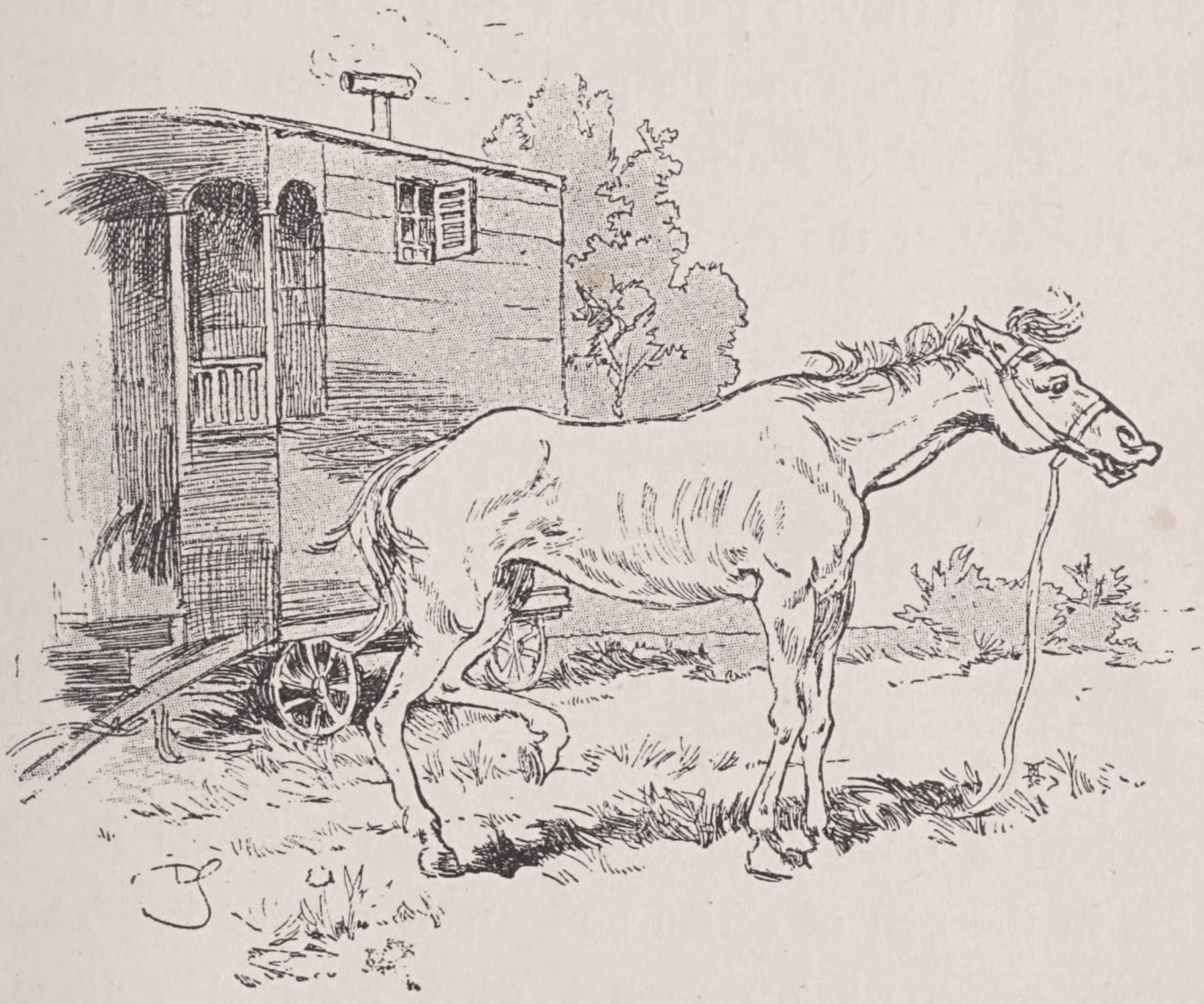
had settled upon this spot for a temporary abode; and as the fair closed the next day, he had arranged with some of the booth owners there to bring the rest of his household goods to Aubergines.

Probably you have at some time seen a group of travellers — gypsies or others — camped at the borders of the woods. It is a curious spectacle, especially when the company is a large one, and suddenly takes possession in a country quite unused to such barbaric intrusion.

They unharnessed Theodulus, who manifested with prolonged whinnies of satisfaction his delight at a prospective diet of green grass. Freed from bridle and collar, he thrust his nose up to his eyes in the brook, and drank eagerly. He could hardly contain himself when he thought of wandering at will over the luxuriant fields, where the rich and succulent verdure spread itself out indefinitely beneath his big, round, wondering eyes. Picketed with a rope of goodly length, he paced sentimentally about his tree, absorbed in equine meditation; his alert ears alone indicated his impressibility to external influences, for he had nothing to distract him but the necessity of switching his tail occasionally to drive away the flies that settled on his flanks.

Jack was quite fond of Theodulus, and sympathized

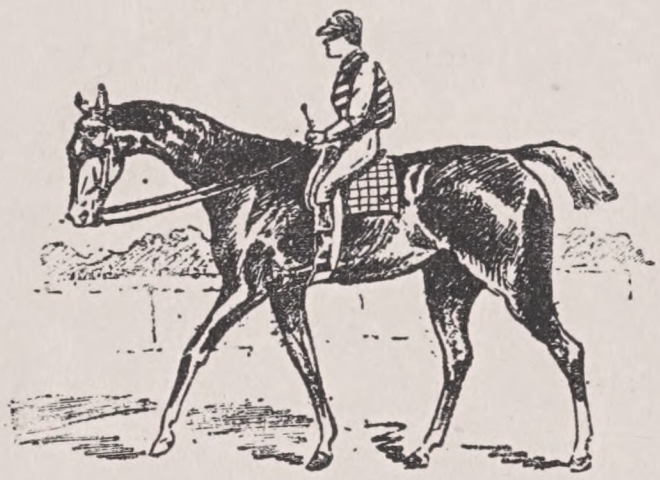
with his silent and patient endurance of his unkindly fate in forfeiting the privileges of a pampered coach-horse, to become the drudge of a mountebank's cart. An unhappy fate truly, which, figuratively speaking, does not befall horses alone!



Theodulus, in the frisky and capricious days of his youth, had known the intoxicating joys of the race-course. For several years he cut a figure in racing annals, and the newspapers vied with one another in glorifying his name, — a name very different from the one he bore now, — a foreign name, difficult to pro-

nounce, and very distinguished. He had received the solicitous care that belongs to those who are in the good graces of the public. They paid the greatest attention to the state of his health. Did he suffer with a slight cold? How about his teeth, — did they ever ache? What could they do for him, if he had a touch of colic? His stable was a marble palace. Devoted to his care was an army of zealous grooms.

The day of the races, — what a time that was! A youth, astonishingly small and slight, clad in rustling silk, clung to his back, and, amid the delirious acclamations of the crowd, he flew three or four times about the oval. Perhaps a cruel spur now and then tore his flanks, but in the zest of action he scarcely noticed it. Then afterward, — what caresses, what honeyed flattery! One day he lost his balance, fell, threw his jockey far to one side, and dislocated his own knee-joint. They kept it in splints until he was able to walk again; but after this accident he always limped a little, and his career of glory was ended.



And so he bade farewell to the races, the cheering

crowds, the marble stable, and the attentive grooms ; and his picture disappeared from the illustrated journals. He was sold at auction. A blacking pedler bought him, and put him in the shafts. After three years of journeyings over the Paris pavements he was exhausted, used up, and longed for rest ; but for poor beasts like him rest does not come so easily. He became a cab-horse, and, scantily fed, made long trips under the constant urging of the remorseless whip. Under these conditions he was often employed to drag people to the races at Longchamps and Auteuil. There he saw the successors to his glory, — vivacious colts, that acted as if they remembered him. What profound pity the old equine philosopher must have had for them ! "Ah, presumptuous youth," we can fancy him thinking, "you know not what awaits you ! The ingratitude of man has made of me a wretched drudge. It may be that you will some day come to a like destiny." But the frisky colts paid no attention to such bitter thoughts, for they were frenzied with the enthusiastic plaudits of the populace.

As a cab-horse he had become wofully thin. With a candle inside of him, he would have served very well for a lantern. You could count his bones ; he was a walking skeleton. Such a wretched carcass, — it was

enough to make one weep. He tripped and stumbled frequently, and at the end of a journey often fell down. It was so much trouble to get him up again, that he evidently much preferred to stay where he was. To

those who came to unfasten the traces, he seemed to say: "Leave me here on the ground; it is the only comfort I have now."

His owner was obliged to get rid of so useless a servitor. There are, it seems, certain ingenious persons who make sausages out of horse-meat. It is not a very

dainty form of sustenance; but on the other hand it is very cheap. Strange as it may seem, there are people who devour such food willingly, in confirmation of the maxim that it's all the same after you get it down, and that he who eats something is happier than he who eats nothing at all. A sausage-maker at the horse market thought he saw possibilities in the wasted body

of Theodulus, and was mentally engaged in figuring the results, when old Grigou presented himself. The poor beast's life was saved. Old Grigou, after prolonged and angry bargaining, pulled out twenty francs; and the former winner of fashionable races henceforth had the honor of dragging a showman's cart from Fair to Fair.

Since the newly acquired steed was now to become a

family horse, it was necessary that he should have a name, so they looked over the Saints' calendar, and decided to name him Theodùlus. When they summoned him to get his feed they called him Theodulus, and he finally learned to answer to the name. Perhaps he remembered the clumsy syllables, — perhaps he responded through force of habit.

After the distressing experiences he had undergone, his new existence seemed quite endurable, especially in the country, where the green meadows made him think of his earlier and happier days. On the whole, he was not starved, and he was passably content with a career of humble usefulness.

Jack had conceived something of an affection for Theodulus, and often gave him a bit of bread. Theodulus manifested considerable gratitude. "Is it of me, or of the bread that you are fond?" the savage would ask, stroking old Theodulus's nose. Ah, Jack, such questions are indiscreet! Motives of friendship should not be too closely inquired into.

XVIII.

A STRANGE ANIMAL.

THEODULUS unharnessed, and the van laid up, they had to dispose of Jack. He must not allow himself to be seen anywhere except at the exhibitions. Gratuitous publicity would take away all the charm of the show, and be ruinous to his reputation. So, day after day, Jack remained a prisoner under a tent made of sheets fastened to the tree branches. It was not a cheerful mode of existence.

"Can't I go out at all?" the poor lad asked.

"Never," responded old Grigou, who was in continual fear lest his savage should run away. "And more than that, if you don't mind me, I'll tie you up."

Tied up or not, it is not surprising that Jack looked on the tent as a sort of prison. He had either to sit or lie down, for the tent was so low he could not stand upright; and under these conditions it seemed to him as if the days would never end.

"Prisoners in jail are a good deal better off," he

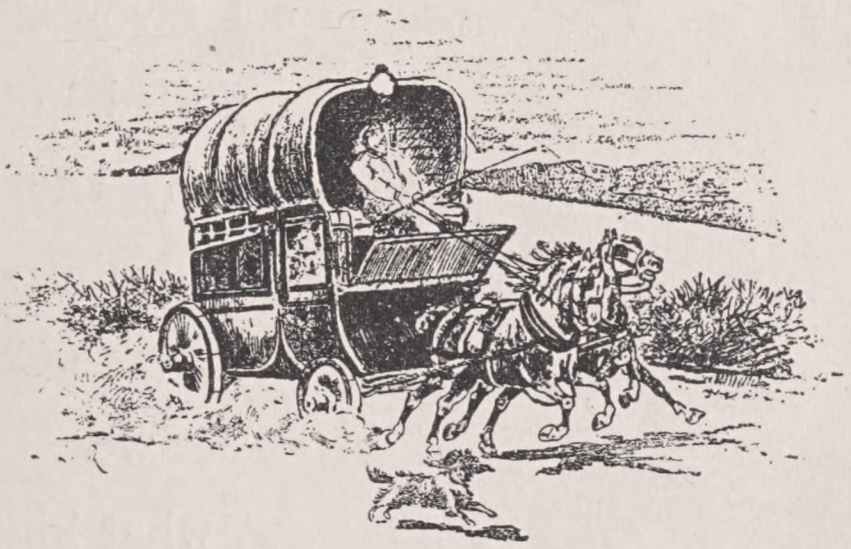
said to himself; "they know when they're going to get out."

Through a little aperture which he had made in the cloth by pulling out some of the threads, he could watch the monotonous life that went on about him,—

Theodulus grazing about the tree and in the open air, fortunate beast; Ma'am Grigou at the brookside, washing stockings and handkerchiefs; and old Grigou lying on his back, taking a swig of brandy now and then, and smoking like a kitchen chimney.

The country all about slept in an atmosphere of sweet repose. The songs of the birds came softly from the distance; and now and then, very far off, a dog barked or a horse neighed.

Along the road, from time to time, farm wagons rolled heavily with their companies of laborers; and sometimes the stage-coach, with its clear-toned bells and clattering equipage, rushed quickly by. Through his peep-hole Jack saw an old woman tottering under a



load of brushwood; it seemed to him that he had seen her somewhere before, perhaps in fairy-land, — what wonders does one not see in fairy-land? — and she looked like an old witch. She was a good old creature, nevertheless; and when she drew near the wayside camp, she seemed to scent out evil; and by way of protecting herself from harmful spells, she devoutly made the sign of the cross. Peasants coming and going from the town betrayed not a little curiosity;

and some of them were bold enough to try to get up a conversation with old Grigou.

"What have you got in that cart? Must be close quarters, if you sleep in there!"

Others, more mistrustful, avoided any such familiarities, and scrutinized the encampment in a very suspicious manner. Their impressions were evidently not favorable; for they pulled one another by the sleeve, and said, —

"Come along; we don't know what kind of people they are. We ought to think well of our neighbors, but 'tis plain they are not the same kind of folks that we are."

In the minds of these critics, the wayfarers were identified with travelling tinkers, about whom a great many thrilling stories are told around the fireside, and who are accused of many misdeeds, most of them imaginary.

The children who came that way were very shrewd. They were frightened at first, and would not approach very near ; but little by little they grew bolder, and spied upon the camp with the cunning of so many Indians. They watched Ma'am Grigou as she cooked the meals, and clustered about the showman, taking flight at a threatening gesture from him like a flock of blackbirds, and then quickly returning. Theodulus received a fair share of their attentions. The little scamps, — what would they not have given to have procured admission to the van ! They stood on one another's shoulders to get a glimpse of the interior of the vehicle. A house on wheels, — who ever heard of the like of that ?

The tent did not, of course, escape inspection. The boldest of them made repeated attempts to peep under the sheets and find out what was within, for they had detected movements indicating that the shelter was inhabited. By whom ? By what ? Old Grigou watched them so closely, that for a long while their curiosity was not satisfied. One day, however, his vigilance relaxed for a few minutes ; and a little fellow, more audacious than the rest, took advantage of the opportunity. Lying flat on the ground, he lifted the sheet, and pushed his head inside. He beheld Jack, and was convulsed with terror.

"A wild beast!" he shrieked. "Oh, mamma, mamma, mamma!"

The cry summoned old Grigou; and as the portion of the lad's body remaining out of the tent offered admirable facilities for correctional treatment, the showman used his big hand quite liberally. It was a trying position for the victim. Should he crawl inside, or draw back? In front he saw a horrible object; in the rear he was threatened with vigorous punishment. Fear of the wild beast, — in other words, of poor Jack, — was in the end the stronger emotion. He disengaged his head, his hair actually on end in the extremity of his terror.

"You rascal!" said old Grigou, seizing him by the ear, "he might have eaten you alive!"

Without waiting to hear more, the youthful scout hastened to his companions, and they all ran away as fast as their legs could carry them. When they had got a long distance, out into the fields, they looked

back breathlessly, to see that the strange beast was not on their trail; being reassured as to this, they stopped.

"What did you see? Oh, tell us! what did you see?"

Fear led the victim of old Grigou's wrath to relate a fantastic tale. What had he not seen? He was still panting from the effect of the spectacle. He saw something that looked like a human, but all black, and covered with feathers.

"A crow?"

"A crow doesn't have hands, and this had hands."

"Did it talk?"

"I thought it made a noise."

"Did it have eyes?"

"Yes, like coals of fire."

"Did it move?"

"Yes, I thought it was coming after me."

"Say, do you suppose 'twas the devil?"

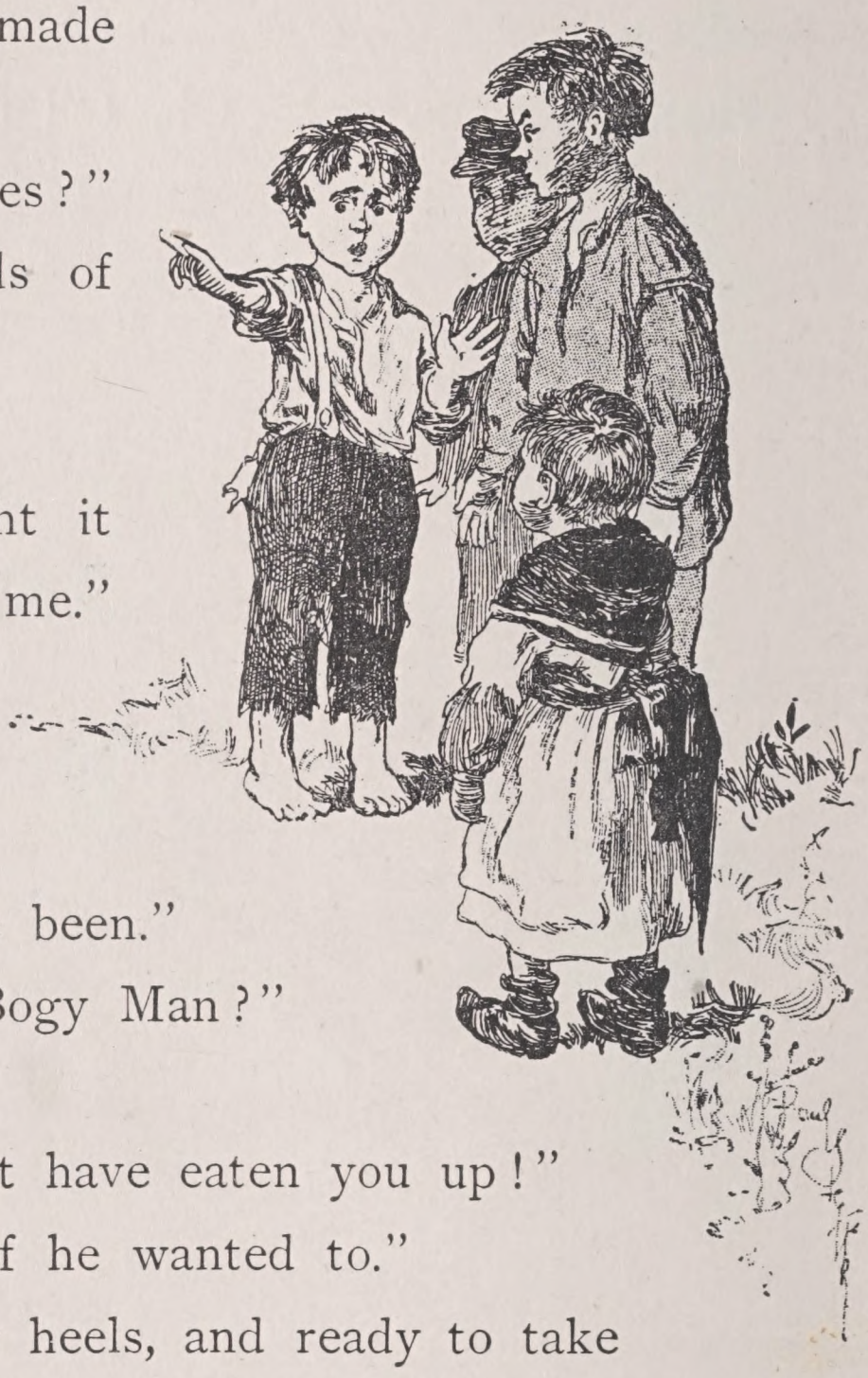
"It might have been."

"Or the Old Bogy Man?"

"Maybe so."

"Why, he might have eaten you up!"

"He acted as if he wanted to."



Sitting on their heels, and ready to take flight anew at the least alarm, they pointed with their fingers, and gasped, as they talked in low tones about the awful place which they called "the wild beast's tent."

XIX.

BY PERMISSION OF THE MAYOR.

In the neighboring town they were the bearers of momentous tidings. They told elaborate stories of what had been seen, and spoke of a strange animal which one of their number, more imaginative than the others, described as "a monkey in the shape of a big rooster!" The oldest inhabitant called to mind a were-wolf, which had once been the terror of the country. The leading men of the place, although putting little faith in the children's stories, suspected there was something which needed investigation; so they determined to bring the matter to the attention of the mayor, who at that moment, in his private capacity as a farmer, was just returning from the fields. The mayor decided upon a careful inquiry; and they were about to visit the encampment, when old Grigou, his shabby hat in his hand, and his breath exhaling the odor of alcohol, humbly presented himself.

"Have I the honor of addressing his honor the mayor?"

He asked for permission to occupy quarters within the town limits. In a slow and ceremonious manner, he drew from his coat-pocket a number of much soiled documents, displaying under a coating of dirt several imposing official seals. It appeared that certain duly qualified personages therein bore testimony to the upright character of one John Isidore Peter Grigou, upon their own responsibility; and although the signatures to all such documents ought above all to be legible, they were in this case, in accordance with the usual style of official autographs, quite indecipherable.

And this reminds me of a story which I once heard from my excellent school-teacher, John Fouilloy, a worthy man, as wise as the whole French Institute, and who possessed the excellent faculty of fixing attention by relating little anecdotes. So one day, when I had been guilty of some extraordinary chirography, he told us this tale: —

"Once, while travelling in a foreign country, one of our compatriots, a Frenchman, was called upon to supply a copy of his birth certificate. The document was forwarded to him; but the copyist had not been able to make out the names of the signers, and this is the way that it ran: —

"'Mayor (illegible).

" 'Deputy Mayor (illegible).

" 'Receiver (illegible).

" 'Sub-Prefect (illegible).'

" 'How strange!' exclaimed the foreign official; 'functionaries in France all have the same family name, and a queer name too, — "Illegible!" ' "

"Now apply this to your own writing. It's absurd that any one with an honest name of his own should allow strangers to think that he calls himself 'Mr. Illegible!' "

To come back to our narrative, the mayor of Aubergines drew out and unfolded his spectacles, — he never put them on except in the performance of his official functions, — and read slowly in a loud voice, following the words with a big, clumsy finger.

"This is all right," he said; "you have conformed to the law. But tell me, why do you come here? This is not much of a place for merry-makings; and a travelling showman will not find it easy to pick up a living among us. Why don't you go on to Orges, just above here, where the Fair opened last Tuesday?"

"I shall do so, your honor, as soon as I can get away. I am waiting here for the rest of my equipment, which is on the way from Paris. I assure your honor that

I mean well to everybody; and the show I give is entirely an honest show."

"That's all very well," interrupted one of the councilmen; "but they talk of a strange animal that you

have in your possession. The children saw it under shelter, and ran away like foxes with firebrands at their tails. What kind of an animal is it that you have there?"

The showman laughed reassuringly. "Why, it's a man!"

"What! A man as black as a crow, and with feathers?"

"An inhabitant of some other planet, perhaps?" interrupted the grocer, who was a person of some reading.

"He didn't come as far as that; but he came from a good ways off, all the same. He's a savage that I brought up."

This announcement aroused in the auditors manifestations of lively interest. A savage was an unheard-of thing at Aubergines; none had been seen there within the memory of man. They had heard savages talked of, because the haberdasher's son, who had been around the world and come back with a parrot and a monkey, had often told of his adventures among them. Thence had arisen stories which had run through the countryside, and often served as warnings to naughty children: "Oh, the wicked boy not to eat his soup; if he's not good, the savage will come and bite him!"

The grocer inquired if this formidable creature were not likely to break out and harm somebody; for his part he didn't feel at all easy with a cannibal at their gates. Old Grigou, greatly flattered with the sensation he had produced, responded in his foolish vanity,

— do not folly and vanity always go together? — that he was perfectly sure of his captive, and was quite ready to be held responsible for the creature's docility and inoffensiveness. A sudden inspiration came to him.

"I'll tell you what I'll do," he said. "On Sunday, after vespers, I'll give an exhibition, with the permission of the authorities, on the public square. The rest of my equipment will be along by that time. I'll set up my booth, and you shall have the chance of seeing my famous Pipirikiki."

"How do you say it? Pipi" —

"Rikiki."

"Ah, Rikikipipi?"

"No, Pipi, — say it after me, — Pipi."

"Pipi."

"Ri."

"Ri."

"Pipiri."

"Pipiri."

"Kiki."

"Kiki."

"Pipirikiki."

"Pipirikiki."

"That's it, — now you have it."

"He must certainly be a savage," suggested the grocer, "or he wouldn't have such a name as that. How much simpler it would be if they would call their children Eustace, like me, or Melia, like my wife."

The showman having received the permission he sought for, folded up his papers, profoundly saluted the honorable company, and gayly took his way back to his roadside abode. As he walked along, he muttered to himself, —.

"I guess I know, as well as they do, that there's no money to be made in this beastly country. When they said that, they showed that their heads were level; but I've got my own little game, and nobody else knows what it is."

XX.

SUZETTE.

Old Grigou was going along the road all alone by himself. He stopped, sat down upon a bank, and

from a pocket more carefully concealed and deeper than the one from which he had taken the official papers, he

drew out a small case, opened it, and revealed a picture. Such a charming picture it was! A sweet-faced little maiden, in a halo of seraphic curls, whose features expressed a mischievous grace, looked up and smiled into the old showman's eyes. He lifted it to his lips, and kissed it eagerly. He rubbed the soft, bewitching countenance against his rough beard.

"My darling little Suzette," he said, talking to himself. "Those people don't know that I've come all this way to see you. Yes, your old grandpa has come to see his little pet."

That was old Grigou's secret; he had a little granddaughter, and he worshipped her; but he had caused her to be brought up aloof from all contact with the rude world in which he lived, guarding her as carefully as if she had been a princess. His colleagues at the

Fair had never seen Suzette, and would never have dreamed of such touching tenderness in one so brutal and rough in his behavior, and so ruthless in his tyranny over poor Jack.

And yet old Grigou was not entirely without the pale of humanity. The most arid and forbidding personalities may be like the Great Desert, blossoming here and there into a beautiful oasis. Even in the most sinful and depraved, there are remnants of a yearning towards goodness, through which they may be brought to salvation ; they are like the wicked cities spoken of in Holy Writ, which are not destroyed so long as two or three just men remain within them. In the gloom of the darkest heart, there are always a few feeble, yet persistent, rays of goodness, tenderness, and affection. There is no such thing as absolute wickedness. The most hardened criminals, boldly confronting the evidences of their wrong-doing, may be melted to tears of repentance when the right chord is touched. We ought never to despair of humanity ; in the most lamentable failures, there are possibilities of a return to the beautiful and the good.

Old Grigou had a little granddaughter whom he adored, and in whose behalf he was stirred with extraordinary emotions of affection and resolution. Was it

not for her that, even in his old age, he continued to lead the hard life of a wandering showman; that he increased little by little, with the aid and encouragement of his wife, his little store of savings; that he endured discomfort and privation, — too often, it is true, enlivened with the "small drams" of which, in his decrepitude he felt the frequent need; that he was a nomad on the face of the earth, at all seasons and in all weathers? Yes, that was the reason; he was trying to amass a dowry for Suzanne, — for his Suzette. And observe how curiously this motive affected his conduct, — it was to make certain the happiness of his sweet child, that he was so hard a taskmaster to the unfortunate lad who had fallen into his hands, and bade fair to make his fortune. Suzette's dowry must grow as fast as possible, and Jack was the hapless victim of old Grigou's fatherly ambition.

Suzette was an orphan; and this is how she came under old Grigou's protection. The showman had displayed but little affection toward his son, had brought him up very strictly, and had caused him to be trained as an acrobat. The lad became a marvel of agility, suppleness, and audacity. You have probably seen him at the circus, — wearing the fantastic garb of a clown, bouncing around like an india-rubber ball, walking

along the ceiling with his feet, and along the ground on his head; for he seemed to do nothing like anybody else, and to be quite independent of the law of gravitation to which ordinary mortals are subject. Between his somersaults and girations, young Grigou noticed a damsel, who seemed to take a great deal of interest in his performance. They were married at the mayor's office, and that was a lucky day for the youthful acrobat. In the pride and delight of his heart, he accomplished unheard-of wonders in the way of bold exploits and graceful feats of skill. One day, as he was tossing up hats and catching them on his head, and had got as far as ten, he called out, "It's there, sure!" And then his colleagues brought him a big nosegay, saying in their turn, "It's there, sure!"

"Yes, my friend; it's there, sure. We have the

pleasure of informing you that you have been to-day presented with a lovely little daughter!"

The clown turned pale through his powder, and in a series of mad leaps, — the maddest and most joyous of his whole career, — hastened to the side of the smiling mother.

"I think," said the happy woman, "that you must have snatched her from the angels in one of those lofty jumps you sometimes make from the high trapeze. Isn't she a perfect little angel? Just look at her!"

The clown, who had not spared the time to change his clothes, bent his grotesque head-dress over the frail mite, smiling with his large, red-painted mouth, and stammered two or three tender words. Most of his leisure hours were passed by the cradle, where he kneeled with clasped hands, admiring the pale beauty of the dainty little lips, so eager for the breast; or watching his delight mirrored in the heavenly blue of

those sweet eyes, which were the light of his life; or mumbling the delicate fists, which now and then made faint signs, the first demands for caresses and kisses.

"Dear wife," he said, "we'll call her after you. Her name shall be Suzanne."

I shall make the story short, it is so sad. A month went by, and under the inscrutable stroke of a cruel destiny, Suzanne lost her mother. Grief dulled young Grigou's wits; and so one night, making his daring leap, he missed the lower bar of the trapeze, and fell. That was eight years ago.

Since that time Suzette had been in charge of her grandparents, who had manifested on her behalf unsuspected stores of tenderness, and had caused her to be brought up in a farmer's family, with the utmost care and solicitude. She was a merry, mischievous, bewitching little creature; the charms of her natural disposition being developed by happy and sympathetic surroundings. For all this care, the showman paid willingly a goodly sum; and at the farm they always spoke of her as "Our Young Lady." The Orgeville farm, where Suzette lived, is only three or four miles from Aubergines; and that is why old Grigou had decided to remain in this part of the country, by permission of his honor the mayor.

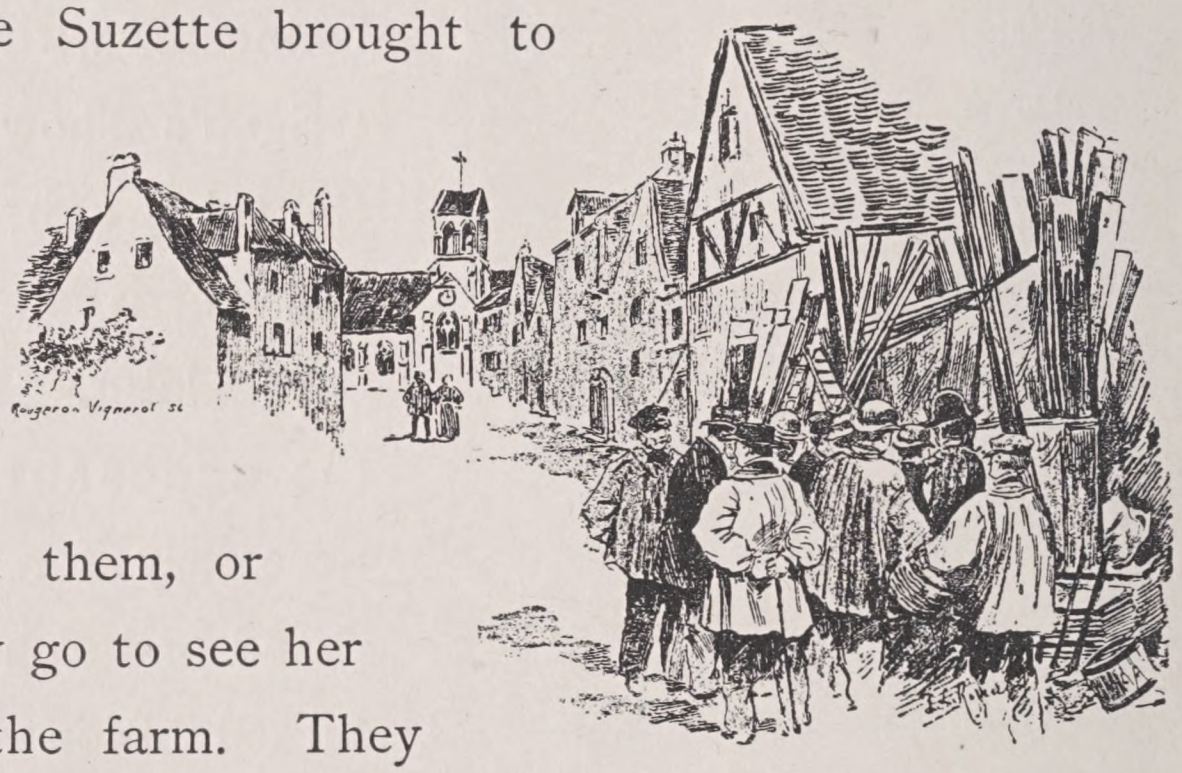
XXI.

LEFT ALONE.

THE rest of the equipment connected with old Grigou's show at the Gingerbread Fair arrived two days later. All the accessories necessary for the grand and wonderful exhibition were got together, and the news was announced everywhere by the village drummer, — "rat-a-tat, rat-a-tat, tat!" The people gathered in groups along the main street. They told one another that it was going to be a great occasion.

Grigou had taken advantage of their brief period of repose to brighten up and redecorate the booth and signs, and to study up a new speech, for the old one was getting to be somewhat hackneyed. He did all this, however, in an abstracted way, for his thoughts were largely occupied with his beloved Suzette.

A long debate occurred between himself and his wife as to whether they would have Suzette brought to visit them, or they go to see her at the farm. They concluded that it would be better to go to her. There are foolish and disagreeable people everywhere, and the showman's granddaughter might be ridiculed if her relation to them were known. They would avoid any possibility of offensive remarks, by concealing their occupation from Suzette's friends and acquaintances. The difficulty in this plan was for the grandfather and grandmother to



get away long enough to make the proposed visit. Who, in their absence, would guard the camp? Who would attend to Theodulus?

"Wife," said the showman, "it seems to me that Jack" —

"He? Why, he'd run away if we left him alone."

"Run away, rigged up as he is, all black, and covered with feathers? He wouldn't get farther than the first farm before the laborers would be after him with a pitchfork."

"Well, I guess you're right. We'll leave him to look after the van, and to-morrow we'll make our visit to Suzette."

The next day they showed an extraordinary interest in poor Jack's welfare, — so much so that the lad was not a little surprised at their change of attitude. Perhaps you remember the little story I told you, along back, about John, and how he helped the pedler woman when she was having such a bad time in the snow. You remember, — when he lent a helping hand after he had seen the oranges.

No doubt the kindness of the showman and his wife was far from being disinterested; but Jack was so hungry for even a show of affection, that he was

simple enough to believe himself at length in a fair way to get into the good graces of his employers.

"Jack," said old Grigou gently, — that is to say, as gently as his harsh, brandy-rasped voice would per-

mit, — "Jack, you are to eat henceforth at the boss's table. We are very well satisfied with your behavior, and wish to give you a little pleasure. You have been a good boy, and have given us no trouble. Come along, then, and sit down and eat all you want, and to-night we'll have another surprise in store for you."

Jack was confused, and stammered out his thanks, his heart overflowing with joy and gratitude. "But why are they so kind to me?" he thought; "is it the country air that makes them so polite?"

They sat down; the stew was appetizing and fragrant. They poured out a draught of wine for him, and, dainty of dainties, regaled him with apple-tart. It was a veritable orgy.

"By all that's great," exclaimed the boss, "they shall never say that we didn't give you a drop of the right stuff."

"Papa," said Ma'am Grigou coaxingly, "you'll just spoil the boy."

That was true enough, for a drink of brandy is enough to spoil any boy; it's not a beverage suited to youth. Jack made a dreadful face.

"Hum," said old Grigou; "good?"

"It chokes," replied Jack, with a laugh.

"Well, put some sugar in it; that will make you a lollipop."

"Sugar?" responded Jack, who had the vanity of the youth who wanted to be a man; "sugar? No, thank you; that's all very well for babies!"

The repast ended, — the first square meal that Jack had had for many a day, — the lad felt as gay as a lark,

and as chatty as a blackbird. The showman sent his wife away to dress; and she came tottering down the steps, her vast corpulence emphasized by a gown of gray silk, dating from her far distant honeymoon. She had put on her fine, flower-decked bonnet and all her jewels, — a medallion brooch bearing a silhouette portrait of her husband as he was in his younger days, a gold chain, and numberless rings; so that she had a fairly monumental aspect.

The old showman himself was got up in no such grand style, — a voluminous cravat and good stout shoes were the principal features of his Sunday toilet. Jack was surprised on seeing old Grigou and his wife attired in their best, and on the point of departure.

"Savage," said the boss, "we leave you in charge. Everything is made fast; keep close watch, and don't allow anybody to enter. You understand me. Have

an eye on Theodulus. As for yourself, I advise you not to get far away. There are mounted police in this neighborhood."

"Police!" repeated Jack, turning pale.

"That's all. I simply warn you. Don't go outside. We shall be back in a few hours. If you behave yourself," old Grigou added, "I'll give you a cleaning up at Whitsuntide, and you shall be a white boy again for a day or two. That will be a vacation for you."

"Oh, boss! I'll be as good as gold. You'll see. I'll do anything, if you'll only let me be white again!"

Old Grigou and his wife walked away, turning back now and then somewhat anxiously. "I don't feel easy about this," said Ma'am Grigou; "no; I don't feel easy about it."

XXII.

THEODULUS'S GLUTTONY.

How strange it seemed to Jack after they were gone! At last he was alone and at liberty; but liberty was to him so unusual a boon that he hardly knew what to do with himself. Released from restraint, left to himself, to a certain degree his own master, how should he pass the time? He wandered about the camp, examining closely what he had heretofore only seen at a distance, feeling of what he had been forbidden to touch, — but timidly, stealthily, trembling at the least noise, as if the incessant scrutiny of his jailers, which had weighed so heavily upon him, had not been interrupted by their departure. They were invisible, but he felt the influence of their presence. Every instant he expected to see them leap from the ground. In the first few moments this sensation was very strong in him.

They had told him not to go far away; that was enough to make him wish to explore the surrounding

country; but he felt shy and uneasy as he looked around. The road was deserted. The laborers in the fields were so far off that he could scarcely perceive their almost motionless figures.

Access to the interior of the van was, to his great regret, denied him; the door was closed and locked. He walked around it, trembling lest he should be perceived, stepping carefully, and on the alert to make a quick retreat. Theodulus, in a calm and dignified way, was brousing on the scant herbage that still remained uncropped. Jack went to make him a visit. Their old friendship naturally led them to say a great deal to each other. Jack sat down on the ground, and began a dialogue in which the burden of conversation was very largely on his side. To all appearances, Theodulus was content to listen. He looked at Jack with his big gray eyes, pricked up his ears occasionally, and only switched his tail when the flies were very bothersome. Theodulus was evidently satisfied with not being

ignored. Several friendly slaps upon the neck seemed to be agreeable to him ; and with the utmost gentleness he rested his great head on Jack's shoulder, and went on chewing the mouthful of grass he had gathered from the sward. At this manifestation of esteem, Jack, not wishing to be outdone in politeness, decided to tender a hunch of bread, and he went to his tent to get it.

Zany, the monkey, who was looking on, bubbled over with wrath. He could not understand at all why he was not included in the festivity. He sniffed up his nose, and hurled fierce imprecations at the youthful savage. In the violence of his emotion, he danced a wild can-can at the end of his chain, his little eyes snapping wickedly. Jack, who had never been on friendly terms with the monkey since the tricks the creature had played on him that first day, paid but little attention to these manifestations of tempestuous fury. He was thinking only of his friend Theodulus, and did not concern himself with the ingrate. Theodulus seemed to be greatly touched with the attention bestowed upon him, and made known his pleasure in a whinny of satisfaction.

To the bread, of which the horse made a generous feast, Jack decided to add a few handfuls of feed, of which he had discovered a store in rummaging about

the premises. To think, that on his first restoration to liberty, Jack should have used it so ill! A horse is fed at regular intervals. We may suppose that under the showman's rule the intervals were somewhat extended, and that a more abundant repast would not be likely to cause Theodulus serious suffering through indigestion; but, at any rate, he had ordinarily enough to keep him going, and that, after all, is the essential thing.

"They're no good, if you keep 'em fat," said the showman, whose proverbial wisdom was invariably based on motives of economy. Theodulus was not weighed down with superabundance of flesh; and if a horse's capacity for work is in proportion to his thinness, he must have been of invaluable service.

"Poor old fellow," said Jack, whose sympathy for dumb animals was always alert; "poor old fellow,

you're nothing but skin and bones! They pinch us close in this establishment! What do you say to a good feed?"

Theodulus did not understand very clearly the words of this discourse, but he knew that they were addressed to him. He fixed an eye as large as a silver franc-piece on his interlocutor, and quite failed to grasp the other's meaning. He understood very well, however, — actions speak louder than words to dumb animals as well as to other people, — when Jack brought a basket of feed, and held it a few inches from his nose. Theodulus, aroused at once from his apathy, pulled hard at the tether, and stretched his neck toward the basket.

"Oh, you old glutton!" said Jack. "See how he sniffs! That's the kind you like, eh; good old Theodulus?"

Theodulus, with friendly and vigorous action, rubbed his head against Pipirikiki, and exhibited signs of irresistible appetite.

"Oh, no," cried Jack; "not all of it; only one or two handfuls!" He put in a measure what he thought would be the right amount, and placed the measure on a keg. The basket of feed he returned to the place from which he had taken it. Theodulus was annoyed at the delay.

"Everybody is free here to-day," said Jack; "Grigou is gone away!" He took off the halter, in order that the horse might eat more comfortably. "Hungry? Well I should say so!" he exclaimed, looking on. "There's an appetite for you. Would Mr. Theodulus like a napkin? No? But no doubt Mr. Theodulus would like a little something to drink? We have a very fine brand of Adam's ale in stock here. I will do myself the pleasure of bringing a mug of it for the benefit of my excellent old friend."

The bucket was leaning against the van; he went in quest of it, intent upon filling it with the fresh, cool water from the brook.

Zany, the monkey, continued to display his furious discontent with preparations in which he was not allowed to take part. He made extremely profane remarks in an untranslatable tongue, and went on winking his little vicious eyes. Everything for Theodolus, and nothing for him! Did the savage suppose that such things would be allowed? With his clenched fists, after the manner of a child or an old man, he pulled with all his might at his chain, and shook his cage violently. His wrath was frightful to see.

Jack had excepted Zany from his usual feeling toward animals, out of a not very praiseworthy spirit

of revenge. And what was he seeking to punish?—a mischievous animal, for a very slight grievance. An ape is an ape, and one must be lacking in intelligence to find fault with it for doing apish things.

"Go it," said Jack; "go it! You're a funny one!" He ran out his tongue at the beast; and Zany, in a spirit of servile imitation, returned the compliment.

"You ugly animal," the monkey seemed to say. "You feathered scoundrel; you needn't make up such faces as that at me!"

XXIII.

ZANY AT LIBERTY.

If the relations between the boy and the monkey were somewhat strained, so also was the cord which held Zany captive, — so strained, in fact, that it yielded to the angry tugging and pulling of the enraged animal, and finally gave way altogether. Zany was at liberty, in his turn, and at first was as much astonished at the unwonted experience as Jack had been. He could not believe that he was really free; and, as if to assure himself of his escape, he turned back after every leap away from the cage, with apparent surprise to find that the cord had not in some way again been attached to

his body. Satisfied at length that he was actually his own master, he celebrated his unexpected deliverance with a series of wild gambols which had no other purpose than to afford an outlet for his exuberant delight. His newly gained liberty fairly intoxicated him, and inspired all sorts of mad pranks. With absolute freedom, he felt very much as Jack did, and promised himself a very good time.

Jack, as you may imagine, was not at all pleased with the situation. Zany had escaped, and the question now was, What would become of him? What would the boss say when he got back? What punishment would fall upon Jack in consequence of the flight of his four-footed companion? He tried coaxing —

"Zany! Zany! Will you come back? Do, please, come back!"

But the more Zany was urged to return to his cage, the less disposed he seemed to be to obey. He pos-

sessed a good deal of gymnastic talent, and made experiments to see if he had lost his former suppleness; and he found that much of it still remained. Physical training had formed the chief branch of his education; and by the aid of hands, feet, and tail he succeeded in climbing to the top of the booth. There he ambled to and fro, and made faces at poor Jack, whose impatient and feverish despair the monkey found to be quite fascinating. Jack got a ladder, and put it against the side of the booth; Zany sat in a careless and waiting attitude on the edge of the roof; but just as the boy put out his hand to seize him, he adroitly retreated. Jack renewed his supplications:—

"Dear little Zany, listen to me; you don't want to get me into trouble. You don't want to be the means of having me punished. Come back, and let's be good friends. I haven't treated you just right, but I'll make it up to you. Wouldn't you like a piece of bread? I'll get some for you."

The monkey was greatly impressed by this pleading, and did his best to imitate it; but he did not find it at all convincing. He dallied with his liberty in an egotistic and insolent fashion, making as if he were about to come down, and then sidling to the top of the roof again, with a facetious and mocking manner.

"Zany, you want to get me into trouble," murmured Jack in disgust; "all right — all right, I'll remember it."

Zany, seated on the roof, had found an apricot, which had fallen there from a neighboring tree; and he gnawed at it with his handsome white teeth, as he turned it in his busy fingers scrutinizingly. He devoured the fruit with the serenity of an antique god, with absolute indifference to his surroundings, spitting out the skin and the stone that he might enjoy to the full the delicious pulp.

"This is fine," he seemed to say; "this is great! I get my meals in freedom as well as in captivity; and I venture to think that my own choice of rations is best. They never gave me any apricots. It's a fruit that I am very fond of."

He picked up the stone, which he had let fall, with the suspicion that the kernel might give an agreeable

fillip to his palate. He set to work on it with a quiet and business-like air which revived Jack's hopes.

"He won't go very far, that's plain," thought Jack; "perhaps I shall get him back again."

He kept one eye on Zany, and Zany kept one eye on him. At every attempt made by the boy to approach him, the animal stopped biting at the apricot kernel, and put himself on the defensive; then, without moving, he resumed his task, grinding his teeth against the hard stone. You would have laughed if you had heard Jack offering assistance in the most innocent and persuasive way: "It is so hard I'm afraid you can't break it. Sha'n't I help you?" The little fraud! — but he was no match for the monkey. Zany ignored the suggestion. "Thanks, my friend," he might have said; "I know the price of your assistance. You want to tie me up again. That isn't what I got away for."

During this interlude, which had made no disturbance, in spite of the excitement connected with it, Theodulus stood with his nose in the empty measure, and thought how good the feed had been, and how glad he would be to have a little more.

XXIV.

A GENERAL IN PETTICOATS.

Sounds were heard coming from a distance. Everybody listened, —Zany, Theodulus, and Jack. It was a confused clamor of silvery voices and echoing laughter. It drew nearer. It came from a company of children.

Jack left the monkey; and peeping through the hole in his tent, slyly watched their approach.

There were half a dozen of them, — prattling, jostling one another, carrying wooden swords, and wearing paper caps. They dragged behind them a formidable piece of artillery, consisting of a cannon about three inches

long, which had lost one wheel in some previous engagement, and for that reason lay obstinately on one side. The little company must have come from a distance, for their shoes were very dusty; and evidently they were strangers to the neighborhood, for a little country boy, who was passing, looked at them with surprise. They were commanded by a general; and the general, odd to say, was a little girl. It is seldom that the gentler sex participate in military evolutions, but in this case the choice had no doubt been made on account of the special fitness of the dainty maiden for the post which she occupied. She was, in fact, very decided in her manner, authoritative and alert in bearing, and her gestures were few and deliberate. At skipping and running, in which she occasionally indulged with the manifest object of stimulating the zeal of her troops, she was endowed with sprightly energy. She was, in imagination, on horseback; and in order to carry out the illusion, she had put a string in the mouth of one of the boys, and kept the two ends in her hand. Anybody could see, with half a glance, that the string was a bridle, and that the boy was a horse.

The troops began to show some indications of uneasiness. They seemed to be uncertain as to their whereabouts. It is glorious to lead an army out to

battle, beneath a banner made of a tattered shirt tied to the end of a hazel stick; but it is well to remember that the most brilliant warfare must have an end, and that when it is over the proper thing to do is to return to one's own fireside. One of the soldiers spoke: —

"My feet hurt me walking so far. Fighting is pretty hard work."

"I have never been as far as this. Where are we?" demanded another belligerent, in great distress of mind.

"Are we going much farther? I'm afraid," added another.

"It may be that we are lost," the general responded; "but we'll find ourselves again. All you have to do is to follow me."

Henry IV. once made almost exactly the same speech. Great captains, it is plain, have a similar method of meeting such emergencies.

At this point of the conversation, the showman's establishment attracted the children's attention. What could that be? What a funny house! It was on wheels! The army halted, with open mouths and wide-stretched eyes, hesitating between alarm and curiosity. The general lashed her battle-steed, who, champing the bit, — that is to say, the string, — exclaimed: —

"I am afraid!"

"Afraid of what? You ninny! How stupid you are!" responded the brave commander.

He was afraid of the novel appearance of the encampment, which resembled nothing he had ever seen before. Was it inhabited? And what sort of people lived there? The little country lad, who had been looking on, approached and said,—

"Somebody lives there; they's gone away."

"Who?"

"The man and woman." He had seen the showman and Ma'am Grigou departing in their Sunday best, and for that reason he believed that the place was deserted. He supplied additional explanations, drawn from his own fancy, with regard to the presence of the strange wheel-wagon, and of the astonishing beast which had been seen there, and which had made such a sensation in the village. The army gathered about the narrator, and beset him with artless questions, as interested as if they had come upon a new and gayly illustrated story-book.

"And did you see the beast?"

"Oh, yes; yes"—

The details that followed sent a shudder through the audience. Was it still there? Probably. Perhaps it was asleep. All at once a voice cried, "There it

is!" and a general stampede followed, hearts beating wildly, and legs flying like windmills. The little girl commander was the first to stop and turn around.

"Where did you see the beast?"

"There — see! It's looking at us."

The original historian ventured a sidelong glance. "Mine's larger than that," he said; "this is another. There must be a lot of them!"

The terrible animal that had inspired their flight was Zany, who had been attracted by the noise, and had come to see what it was all about. Without relaxing his hold on the apricot kernel, — his greed for dainties making him persistent in his laborious task, — he examined the newcomers with a bantering eye.

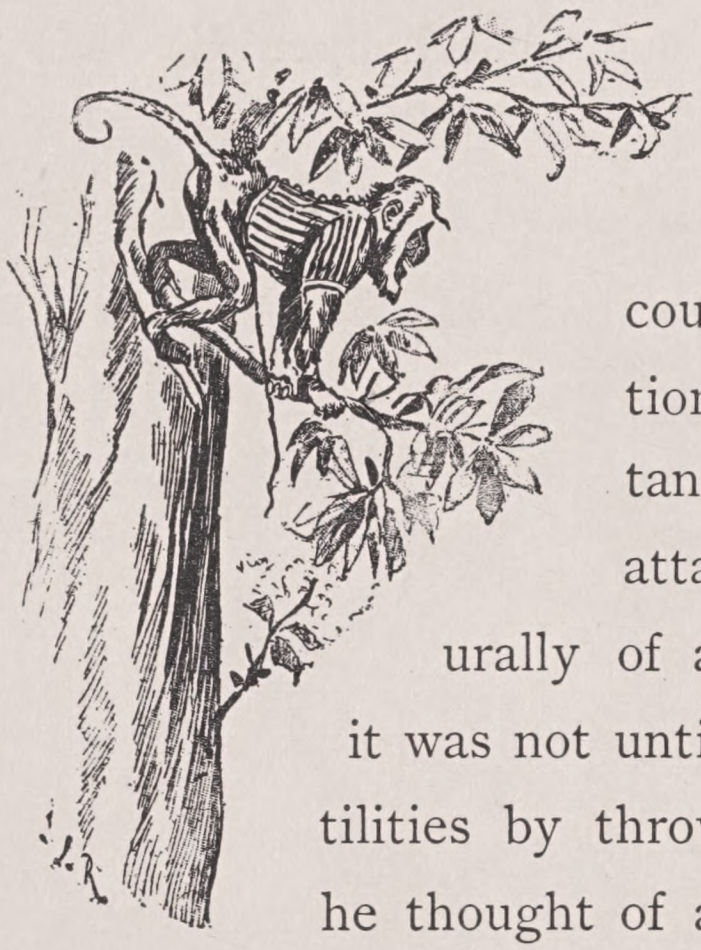
"Why, it's a monkey," said the little girl. "I saw one once at the Fair. Come and see the monkey; it's the funniest creature that ever was."

So they went back toward the camp, reassured, happy, romping, forgetting their fatigue and hunger, the time of day, and their alarm a few moments before when they discovered that they had lost their way. Jack watched them, and rubbed his hands.

"Good!" he said; "they'll make so much noise that they'll frighten Zany, and he'll go back to his cage. I'll keep quiet and see what happens."

XXV.

IN PURSUIT OF THE MONKEY.



But Zany was confident of his ability to elude pursuit, and his courage increased in proportion to the square of the distance between himself and the attacking army. He was naturally of a peaceful disposition, and it was not until his pursuers opened hostilities by throwing a stone at him, that he thought of active defence. The stone did not hit him, but it put him on the alert. He responded by hurling the apricot kernel at the besiegers, and it hit the little country boy straight in the eye. The little fellow shrieked as if he had received his death-wound. This must be a very naughty animal; when he is attacked he defends himself.

The army re-formed, under the effect of this out-

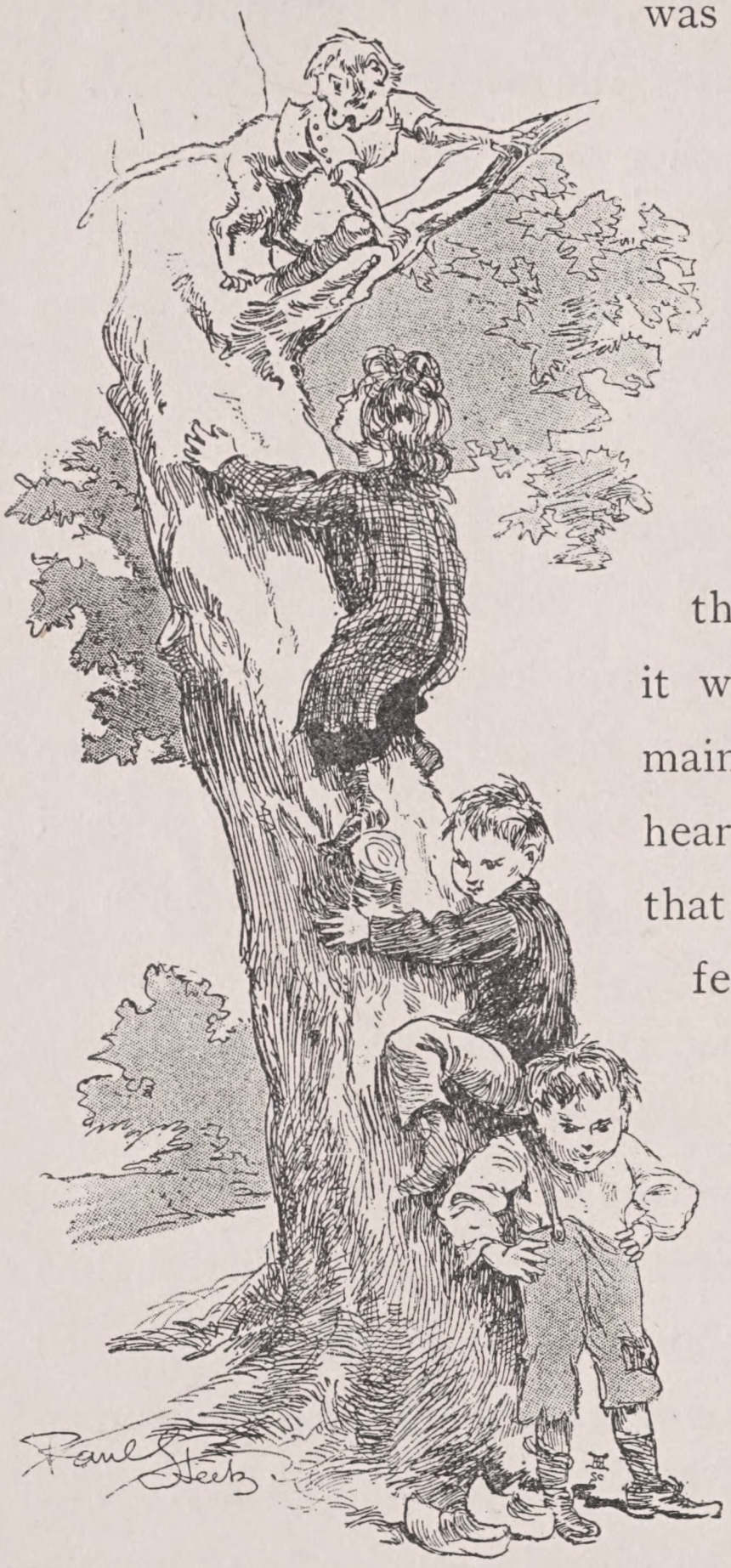
rageous assault, and laid in a new supply of ammunition of all kinds, — stones, clods of earth, and sticks, — with which they pelted the wretched Zany. What could he do against such a volley as that? He must succumb or take flight, and he preferred flight. He sprang into a tree which had one branch overhanging the booth.

Once up there, he was very much at home as he played hide-and-seek among the leaves. He was so far up that missiles could not reach him. He whistled with anger at the outrage which had been perpetrated upon him, congratulating himself upon his freedom from further persecution, and driving the frightened birds from their haunts as he leaped from branch to branch.

"Let's climb up," said the little girl. "Let's bring the monkey down."

Her decision aroused the whole army, and she set them an example. Possessed of unusual agility, and as supple as the monkey she was pursuing, she grasped the tree-trunk with arms and legs, and began to scramble after Zany. Three of the boys followed her. The branches bent almost to breaking under the unaccustomed weight. Zany made ready to leap into an adjoining tree. Jack saw that his plan had miscarried,

and he determined to interfere. As he turned, and was about to show himself to the invading forces, he saw that the gluttonous Theodulus had profited by the opportunity, and now stood at the foot of the tree where the feed was, devouring it with all his might and main. He had entered so heartily upon his repast, that very little of the feed remained.



"The feed," shouted Jack; "he is eating all the feed! This is the last straw; I am done for now. Oh, the rascal!"

He hurled at the imperturbable animal a select vocabulary of opprobrious epithets, — not altogether unpardonable under the

circumstances, — but he would settle with Theodulus later on ; at present his duty lay elsewhere. He must rid the tree of the besiegers.

The children had entered upon their sport with a zeal peculiar to their age, and they conducted themselves quite differently from the behavior of Robinson Crusoe in a somewhat similar contingency. To begin with, they made a deafening racket. They bawled and shrieked and screamed. Zany had all his plans laid for successful flight ; and for the time being he contented himself with making feints at his persecutors, showing that even in the art of war he was their master.

The girl commander of the troop pressed him hotly. She strove valiantly to seize him, and they carried on the contest like two agile gymnasts. She sat astride the highest branch of all, and grabbed Zany by the tail. The monkey devised a stratagem ; he jumped upon the head of the intrepid maiden, and dominated the situation with a gravity of aspect truly absurd.

Jack thought it time to emerge from his concealment. He stood out in the open, and making a speaking trumpet of his hands, he shouted, —

"Wait, and I'll help you !"

A brief and frigid silence followed this announce-

ment, and then a noise of rustling leaves accompanying a general descension. The children slipped from the tree like a bunch of grapes, overwhelmed with panic-

terror, very pale, and their hair standing on end. "The beast!" said one.

The little girl remained in the tree, however, and mocked at the cowards who had forsaken her. With

her skirts drawn close about her, she craned over in a dominating fashion, and snapped her fingers at "the beast," as her little comrades called poor Jack. But as the tree rebounded from the sudden retreat of the other children, the branch on which she sat swayed wildly; and, agile as the courageous maiden was, a catastrophe was inevitable. Oh, look, look! She is falling, she is falling! From such a height as that, a fall would be a terrible thing. The children on the ground gazed in consternation. Jack felt the blood rush to his face, and then back to his heart, leaving him faint. He staggered, and leaned against the side of the van to keep himself on his feet. When he opened his eyes, he expected to see a bruised and mangled form lying on the turf, cast down there from the effect of his sudden shout. What was his astonishment to see her, in fact, lying across Theodulus's back, and Theodulus running away!

By an unlooked-for and fortunate accident, the little maiden had, in her fall, lighted upon the brave Theodulus, who, having completed his larceny of feed, had remained at the foot of the tree in philosophical meditation. He did not seem, at first, to be very much surprised at the unwonted burden so unexpectedly thrust upon him; and it so happened that the little

girl, in lighting upon his back, was more stunned than hurt.

Theodulus thought the matter over for a moment; never in his experience had a rider fallen upon him from the skies before. Did he, perhaps, revive his memories of the race-course? That is possible. It may be that the scant weight of this new rider reminded him of the jockeys who had once guided his course at Longchamps and Auteuil; it may be that he dreamed of happier times.

Perhaps, too, the sumptuous repast in which he had just indulged had stimulated his spirits to unaccustomed vivacity, and he may have imagined that he was once more entered against English competitors in the struggle for the grand Paris prize. This idea firmly fixed in his mind, he hesitated no longer. Animated by a generous ardor, which was no doubt largely due to the feed, he galloped away in a frantic dash, while the

small maiden, pale but determined, kept a firm grip of his mane.

Jack understood fully the extent of the danger to which the little rider was exposed. Either the child would fall off the horse's back and be seriously injured,

or the horse himself would stumble and fall, and crush the precious burden which had so marvellously been thrown upon him.

Theodulus became more and more excited, and galloped wildly onward. The children under the tree were glued to the spot, as they saw their brave companion swiftly carried away. Jack made a rapid cal-

culation, and decided that by taking a short cut he might perhaps intercept the horse and its helpless rider before any further accident happened. He darted away in the direction which he thought most favorable to his purpose.

XXVI.

OLD GRIGOU'S SORROW.

TEN minutes had barely elapsed after the incidents just related, when the showman and his wife returned. They were gloomy and perplexed.

"I can't understand," Grigou was saying to his wife, "how Suzette could have been away so long; she must have met with some accident."

"She's so wild; so heedless; such a tomboy. Always playing with ragamuffins. Is there any other girl of her age with such ways? She is not fond of other little girls, and she won't have anything to do with dolls. She wants to run and caper and climb trees, and be more of a monkey than Zany himself."

"What would you have? She gets all that from her father. One isn't daughter to an acrobat for nothing."

"Her mother wasn't an acrobat, but a quiet and ladylike person. Why couldn't she take after her mother, or after her grandmother? Do I go capering and skipping around? Did you ever see me skip? Do

I turn somersaults? Did you ever see me turn somersaults? My faith, I can't understand what gets into the children's blood nowadays!"

"Be easy, Perpetuity; don't get excited. Suzette will be back soon. She must be out in the fields somewhere."

"I don't feel so sure about that. Out in the fields? She didn't get back, either to dinner or supper; and that isn't usual. Something's happened. Listen to me. You stay here at the van, and this evening I will go back to the farm. I must look into this; in any case we don't want her going out galavanting around in this fashion."

"Have it your own way, woman," responded Grigou, no less uneasy than was his wife.

At a respectful distance from the camp stood a little group of children, the remnants of the little military expedition, very much excited, and yet very quiet. The little country boy pointed with his finger at the showman and Ma'am Grigou, and said, "There they are!"

Old Grigou was the first to enter the camp, followed by his wife. He took a look into Jack's tent, and called out, —

"What's this? He isn't here!" Then he shouted, "Jack! Jack! Jack! where are you?"

Receiving no answer, he called again. Had he run away? Could it be possible, in such an attire and in full daylight? Could he possibly have been guilty of

such folly? And yet it was very plain that he was not about the camp. Moreover, Theodulus was gone too.

"Merciful goodness!" lamented Ma'am Grigou; "why did you leave him here alone? It's your fault.

I told you how it would be. To think of leaving a savage here by himself, and now he's run away with the horse. Quick, Grigou; hurry to the police! Hurry, and have him arrested! He's a thief, a robber, as perfect a scoundrel as ever lived!"

The showman prowled about the camp, and found the feed-basket empty. "See here, he's given him all the feed! It's enough to make him crazy. Theodulus always was a frisky animal. If he's at his old tricks, old girl, he must be a good ways off."

"Goodness gracious!" exclaimed Ma'am Grigou. "This is the last straw. What shall we do? One thing follows another, — Jack gone and the horse stolen! What in the name of mercy is going to happen next?"

"If I get my grip on him once," said the showman, swinging the well-worn strap, "he won't need any fire to warm himself with."

"If you get your grip on him!" squeaked his wife; "he's got the best of you, you big, stupid dummy. To think of your going roaming round the country and leaving this place in the care of such a blackguard!" She leaned over, close to his face, and hooked her fingers as if she were going to scratch. "Aw, if I didn't just hold myself in!" —

Attracted by the violence of this outbreak, and by the suggestive attitudes and gestures with which it was accompanied, the children had drawn nearer, and the open door gave free range to their curiosity regarding the interior of the van and its inmates. Breathless, alert, ready to take flight at the slightest warning, they looked with all their eyes, and listened with all their ears.

The dialogue was continued in more and more exasperating terms, and culminated in a paroxysm of anger. Each accused the other of responsibility for Jack's escape and the loss of Theodulus. Despair succeeded to wrath. Each sank upon a stool, a prey to perplexing thoughts, and looking about wildly and confusedly. At this moment a pebble fell at their feet ; they both looked up and saw, in the tree above them, Zany, who had evidently desired to wish them a good-evening.

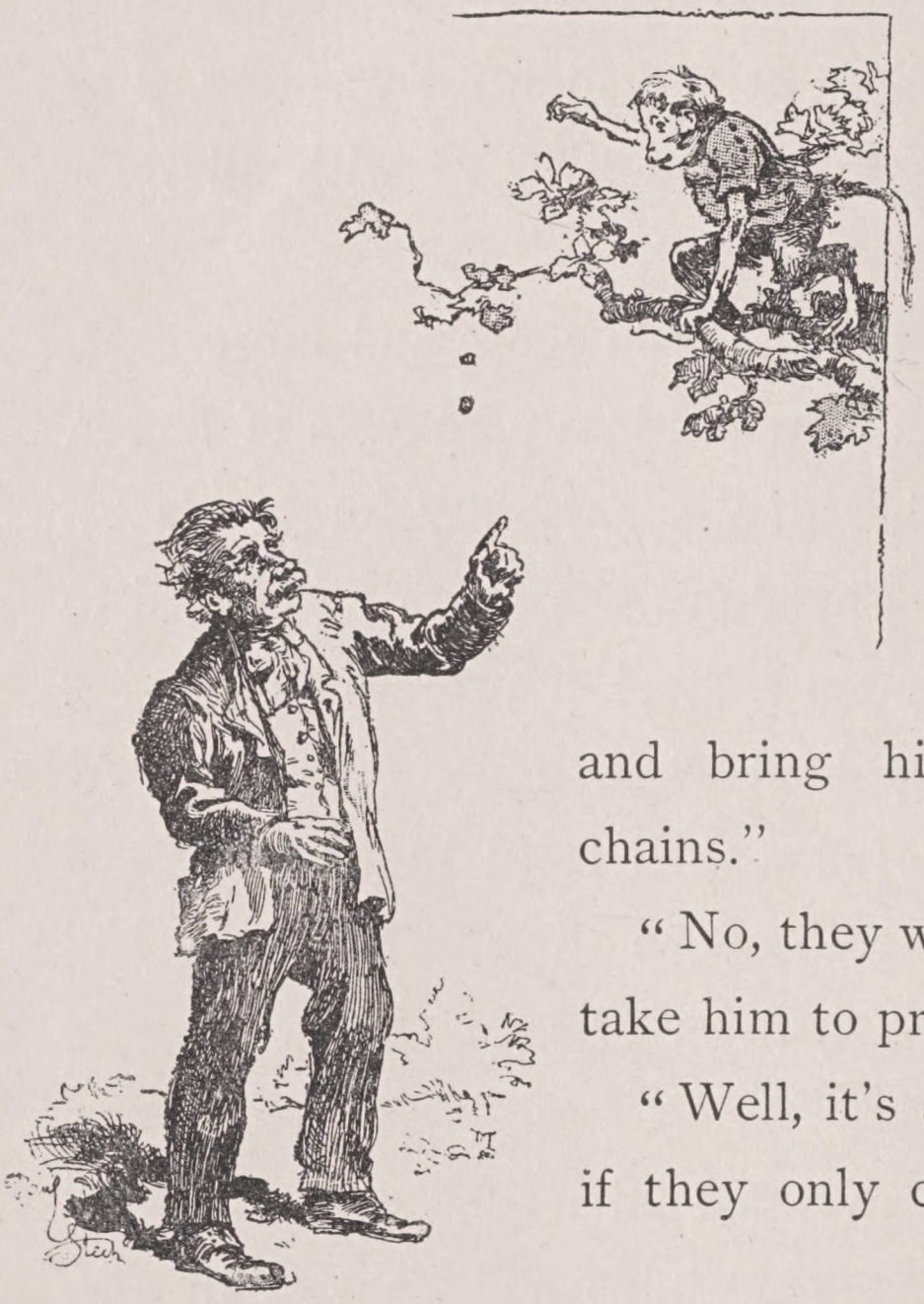
"Zany out too!"

"The rascal has avenged himself well," said old Grigou. "He has set Theodulus and Zany at liberty, and taken leave. He's made a clean sweep."

"Oh," exclaimed Perpetuity, still raging, "the police, the police! Have him arrested. You know what a little scoundrel he is. He's a thief. You must tell everything."

"Are you sure of that? that he is a thief?"

"I heard him one night, talking in his sleep. When he came to us he had been thieving from his employer. Denounce him as a thief. Denounce him quick. Denounce him while you have time,—while he may yet be arrested. If he took the horse to get away, the police have horses, and can chase him. They'll catch him, and bring him back to us in chains."



"No, they won't do that; they'll take him to prison."

"Well, it's all the same to me, if they only catch him."

Zany had laid in a good stock of projectiles, and continued his sport. He sent a shower of pebbles after the showman; and when he hit the mark he was very much amused, and celebrated his success with cries that were more insolent than malicious.

"All right, my good fellow; you'll come back," shouted the showman; "hunger, which fetches the wolf out of the woods, will also bring a runaway monkey to his rations. All I have to do is to be patient and wait. Go on with your stone-throwing; it will all be put in the account. When you come home again, we'll get up a little dance for you."

Ma'am Grigou planted herself in the doorway, and looked in a questioning way at the landscape, as if she expected some solution of the mystery as to the route which the fugitives had taken. But perhaps there was a better way of getting information. The children, who were hovering round, might know something about the affair. Perhaps they had been a witness of the whole transaction. She put on a smile, and tried to make her voice soft and sweet: —

"Little dears! Little dears!"

The children drew back. She moved forward. They shrank back still farther. She tried the effect of bribery.

"Wouldn't you like some cakes? You shall have some, my dears."

Their terror was appeased; they were reassured by the prospect of sweets. Ma'am Grigou went on with her questions.

"Did you see a funny looking man running away from here?"

"No."

"A black man, all covered with feathers?"

"Oh, the beast!" one of the little boys said, by way of correction.

"The beast, — that's it, — yes, the beast."

"We saw him."

"Come here, Grigou," called Perpetuity, delighted with her idea of examining the children; "come here quick, and listen to what these little ones are saying. They saw the savage going away. Perhaps they know which way he went." She went on with her questioning: "How did he go? On horseback?"

"No."

"He went afoot?"

"Yes; he was running. He ran — he ran — like the wind!"

"Why did he run, my sweet child?"

"I don't know."

"He was running after the horse," interrupted another little boy, with a big tear in the seat of his trousers, — the result of his sudden descent from the tree.

"What? After the horse? Then the horse was running too?"

"Yes, it was, with the little girl."

"There was a little girl, then?"

"Yes."

"On the horse?"

"Yes."

"But why was the little girl on the horse?"

"Dunno."

"She fell," said one of the other children.

"Fell from where?"

"From up there."

"From where the monkey is?" demanded the showman.

They nodded assent. It was not very clear. The little girl fell from the tree, the horse carried her away,

and Jack went running after. What sort of a fairy tale was this ?"

"Just listen," said Perpetuity ; "be patient and listen. The children are not lying." She asked another question. "Was the little girl with you ?"

"Yes," they answered.

The most eloquent of the little strangers now attempted in extremely vague and uncertain language to explain how they had organized an army and gone out to warfare, commanded by the little girl general ; how they had lost their way, and had come to the place where the beast was, had chased the monkey, and how the little girl came to fall.

"Where did you come from ?" asked the showman.

"From Orgeville."

"From Orgeville ?" Grigou felt his heart sink within him. A frightful suggestion darted through his mind. "And the little girl, — do you know what her name was ?"

"Why, of course ; it was Suzette !" exclaimed the children in chorus.

"Heaven have mercy !" exclaimed the showman, almost swooning. "Suzette ! But — but — it was my granddaughter — she fell — the horse carried her away, — why, she will be killed — she will be killed !"

In his agony he made such wild gestures, and uttered such peculiar sounds, and sobbed and gasped so, that the children were frightened, and ran away as fast as they could go toward the village, and were no more seen that night. The showman came to his senses, and stammered to his wife, who was as much frightened as he, —

"She was here. Why did I go away? Destiny is punishing me for the evil I have done. But why should vengeance fall on Suzette, — our poor little Suzette, — who even at this minute may perhaps be" —

In the tree above them, Zany, to whom nothing was sacred, made as if he were weeping also, wiping his dry eyes with his little fists.

XXVII.

HOURS OF ANGUISH.

NIGHT fell, casting grim shadows among the trees, and deepening the mystery which hung over the flight of the departed savage. Old Grigou, like every nomad, knew that the earth is an excellent conductor of sounds. He put his ear to the turf and listened, hoping that he might detect the furious gallop of a horse or cries of alarm. Only a vague rumbling, like an echoing hymn of human activity, sounded through the serenity of the darkness in response to his desire. He determined to organize search parties to go in pursuit of the fugitives. He ran around the camp, and looked at the grass, to see if he could detect any evidences of a trail. Close by the brook he found a horse's footprint, freshly made in the moist earth. Theodulus must have gone that way ; but whither ?

In a thicket, close by, the shrubbery was thrust aside, and a broken branch from a hawthorn showed white, indicating that some one had gone in that direction.

A significant detail informed them that Jack must have departed that way; for a feather, torn from his disguise, was caught upon a thorn.

At this moment Ma'am Grigou made a frightful discovery. At the foot of an oak she found a little stain of blood. Who had been wounded? Must it not have been Suzette? A horrible dread seized upon her; she was tortured and crushed by evil forebodings. Their little grandchild wounded! As always happens when we are anxious about those we love, imagination summoned up the most cruel possibilities. Old Grigou and his wife beheld in fancy a tiny, breathless form, borne away by a wild and uncontrolled steed, which had been goaded to madness through lavish feeding!

As the darkness deepened and added to their sufferings, they decided to go to the village and beg the assistance of the mayor. The drummers would go about the streets and cry the news. The farm-hands would assemble for the hunt after the fugitive horse; they would rummage the thickets, the groves, and the fields; and if the child had fallen from the animal's back and been stunned, or had fainted, they would care for her, and bring her home.

"Wife, you stay here, in case, you know, that they should come back and bring her. We can't tell

what may happen. As for me, I'll go and see the mayor."

"It's all our fault; I can see that," said Ma'am Grigou. "It's all our fault. We tried to be very secret, and not let Suzanne know that her grandparents were in the show business. We didn't tell the truth, and our

deceit has been punished. Poor little Suzanne, if you are only alive and well, and in a condition to know the truth, it is all the happiness that I ask for now!"

The grief of the showman and his wife was so sincere that it was really touching. Their punishment was so cruel that it evoked compassion. They were transformed by misfortune. Their faces lost the hard and forbidding expression which had been com-

mon to them in other days; and it seemed as if the agony in their hearts softened their countenances. Their voices expressed high and noble emotions. They were transfigured through their tears. It is a pathetic sight, is it not, to see even the wicked weep?

The showman set out for the village, while his wife remained at the camp, and with frantic eyes searched the horizon, seeking constantly for some trace of the fugitives. She looked at the ground anew, hoping to find footprints; but the dry earth gave no further sign of the direction taken by the horse and the children. She went to the nearest house and made inquiries there; but the woman in charge had

seen nothing. Herders were getting their flocks back to the fold, but none of them had any news to give Ma'am Grigou.

She went on and on, unconscious of fatigue, crazed by anxiety, stopping now and then to call "Suzanne! Suzanne!" Her voice floated away into space, or came back to her in menacing and ironical echoes from the sides of the gorges and the valleys.

With streaming eyes and heaving breast, she sank tremblingly upon a heap of stones left by workmen at the roadside. She was fairly dazed with misery. In thought she was still searching the whole countryside. Whither could they have gone? Not a hint, not a trace, — it seemed as if nature itself were in a plot to baffle her, and to crush all her hopes. No one had seen anything, no one offered her the slightest aid in searching for her granddaughter. Not far away, she discerned a deep ravine, and hastened there, a prey to poignant anxiety. What if Suzanne had fallen in? She leaned over the edge in terror, but could see nothing, and called once more, "Suzanne! Suzanne! Little Suzanne!"

XXVIII.

A VISIT TO THE MAYOR.

THE showman explained his troubles to the village authorities, and asked the mayor to allow the drummer to go about the streets and call for assistance in searching for the lost child.

"For you see," said Grigou, "it's my granddaughter that I care about. Theodulus may go to blazes, and that infernal rascal, Jack, may go with him. But Suzette, — that's what we call her, gentlemen, Suzette, — I beg of you, do what you can to find her and give her back to me. If you will do this I am ready to pay anything, although it is true that I am far from being a rich man."

The news aroused a great sensation. The village

gossips expatiated on the wickedness of the awful beast, which no doubt, at the sight of a pretty child, had carried her off in its clutches. Didn't everybody remember the picture which the village dressmaker had tacked to her walls, depicting a wild man of the woods, bearing off in his hairy arms a beautiful white woman, snatched from a carriage that had broken down?

"Your savage was like the wild man of the woods," said the women.

"Oh, no; not at all," replied the showman; "he was just like the rest of us."

"That's not the way you talked yesterday. You say so now, to relieve yourself of the responsibility for taking such a destructive creature around the country. He carried off your granddaughter; but it might have been one of our children, just as well. It was a lucky chance that our little ones were not there."

"My good women," said the deputy mayor, "hold your tongues. This poor man is more deserving of pity than of blame. We will help him first to find his granddaughter; after that, we shall see."

"After that, you had better catch the savage," said the women, "and not let him run loose over the country. We don't want that sort of thing going on around here."

The village drummer, summoned in great haste, proceeded to warn everybody of the loss of a little girl, who had probably been carried away by a savage on horseback.

"That isn't it at all," old Grigou objected.

"Never you mind, my good fellow," said the mayor; "you can't pull the wool over our eyes. You had some sort of a wild beast in your possession, and he's done you up, — that's clear enough. Another time, you'll be more careful, and we too. You won't have the chance

again to come skirmishing around here with your Pipirikiki. We are honest and peaceful folks; and we have no use for animals which come from we know not where, and live we know not how."

Old Grigou would willingly have told the truth, and confessed that the pretended savage was only a boy from the Paris streets, painted black and covered with feathers; but the falsehood he had already told blocked the way to any such explanation. The great trouble with a lie is that it closes doors behind it, and rarely allows us the privilege of opening them again to get back to the right place. The showman had lied about Jack, and felt obliged to stick to what he had said. Having declared that he had a genuine savage in his possession, he would not be believed if he undertook now to explain that the savage was no savage at all. He would be confronted with the assertion he had previously made, and they would say to him: "Either you lied before, or you are lying now; which of your two statements are we to accept as the truth?" It would be very embarrassing to be called upon to answer such a question as that!

"That's what comes of lying," said old Grigou to himself, as he went away; and he resolved thereafter to say only what he knew was right. It was an excellent

resolution; but it is greatly to be feared that the old showman was too hardened a sinner to reform all at once.

At the camp he found his wife weeping, with her head in her hands. "Well?" he said.

"I've been everywhere. I'm all used up — I couldn't stir another step. I've searched and asked questions; no one has seen anything. Where can she be? Where can they be?"

No more was said. In the darkness and silence nothing was heard but Ma'am Grigou's sobs. They could not sleep. At dawn they went out to the front of the camp, not daring to confide to one another the terrible fears that possessed them. The woman spoke first, —

"My man," she said, "we are getting our punishment for the way we treated little Jack. There's something in the nature of things that looks out for those who are made unhappy by others. We may do wrong, but sooner or later we've got to pay for it."

"Hush, wife, hush!" whispered the showman, as if unwilling to listen to the open avowal of a truth the force of which he was unable to deny.

"Well, here we are," the woman went on, her eyes downcast, and her hands crossed upon her lap; "we've

lost our granddaughter and the horse and the savage. It looks as if we had about got to the end of things."

How keenly they remembered the hardness, the roughness, the injustice, of which they had been guilty! Certainly the hour for balancing accounts had come.

Ma'am Grigou was silent, absorbed in the bitterness of her own thoughts.

"Wife?" said old Grigou.

"What?"

The showman had seized his hat and stick, and was about to set forth on another tour of inquiry, when one of the villagers came up, and asked, —

"Is this Mr. Grigou?"

"Yes," said the showman; "what do you want of me?"

"We've got news."

"News?" exclaimed Ma'am Grigou impatiently. "Tell us what the news is — tell us at once, my good fellow!"

"I don't know the details. All I know is that the mayor said to me, 'Go find the showman, and tell him we've got news.'"

"I'll go at once," said Grigou, his heart sinking within him.

"I'll go with you," said his wife earnestly.

"No, Perpetuity; you stay here. Somebody ought to be here to look after things." And the showman set forth for the mayor's office, where they were waiting for him.

XXIX.

SUZETTE IS FOUND.

THE mayor's office was not exactly a monument of architectural splendor. It was an old and rustic building; and there, in a great bare room, with cold, forbidding, whitewashed walls, in the presence of a bust draped with two flags, the mayor and his councillors assembled for their official duties. When the showman got there, two policemen were guarding the door to the lockup, — a small cellar under the building, reached by a short flight of steps.

"Come in, Mr. Grigou; come in!" called the mayor. "We have been waiting for you for some time."

"My granddaughter?" demanded the showman first of all.

"She has been found."

A smile of joy lit up the face of the questioner — a smile expressive of so much solicitude, as well as of delight, that it revealed in a flash all the sufferings that he had undergone. Almost fainting, he stumbled and

leaned against the wall. He looked so white that they thought he was going to swoon. They offered him a glass of strong wine, and he drank it down as if it had been skimmed milk.

"Suzette is found — my little Suzette! She is alive?"

"Yes, alive."

His rough hands grasped the hands of those about him. He was so wildly happy that he couldn't resist the impulse to embrace somebody; and it was the

village cooper, the deputy mayor, who received this salute. He shed so many tears, that one of the by-standers said, —

"It's lucky you aren't bottling wine, just now. There'd be more tears than grape-juice in the bottles!"

The mayor's wife came in, leading Suzette — and what a looking object! Grigou had never seen his pet in such a state as this before. Her dress was in rags; one foot was bare; her hair was in a perfect tangle; she had a scratch on one hand, a cut on one cheek; one eye was badly bruised, and the end of her dainty nose had suffered severely. Perceiving her grandfather, she acted as if she expected to be slapped. She threw up one arm to protect her face.

"Don't be scared, Suzette," the showman said tenderly. "I have found you — that's the main thing. Ah, little wretch, what sorrow you have caused me!"

That she had not fallen into some gully and broken her neck was nothing less than a miracle. They explained to the showman that she had been found about three miles from Orgeville, in a potato-field.

"And who found her?"

The farm laborers had seen her sitting on the ground at the edge of a spring. A strange creature, half beast, half human, — that is to say, old Grigou's savage, — was with the utmost tenderness washing the child's bleeding hand, bathing its eyes, and rubbing its feet. Not far away stood a bridleless horse, panting with exhaustion. The savage called to the horse to come to him, and the horse came.

The little girl seemed to be dazed, and did not speak. She made no resistance, but looked about her with terrified glances, and she was all in a tremble. To the great surprise of the onlookers, the savage began to speak to them in their own tongue, and explained that

he belonged to Grigou's show; that the child had fallen from a tree onto the horse, and frightened the animal so that it ran away; and that he, the savage, had run after the fugitives, to prevent an accident if possible, and by cutting across lots had succeeded in intercepting the flying steed, to whose back the little girl was still clinging with all her might.

"Then it wasn't the savage who carried away my granddaughter?"

"It seems not."

"No, grandpa," said Suzette, now for the first time venturing to speak; "no, the horse carried me away. But you mustn't beat him — mustn't beat the horse, grandpa. I was tumbled on his back, and he was 'fraid. He ran away. Oh, what long legs he has, and how fast he runs!"

She did not understand how much the extra feed had to do with this extraordinary manifestation of activity on the part of Theodulus. The worthy animal had been placed in a stable. They went to visit him.

"Here you are, you rascal!" said the showman.

Suzette reached up to the horse's nose and patted him softly.

"And the savage?" asked Grigou.

"We can't be too careful," said the mayor, "with

creatures of this sort. I had him put in the lockup, and have ordered two policemen to guard the door."

"He's very gentle," said Suzette; "I want to see him."

They went to the lockup, and one of the policemen ordered the unhappy Jack to come out. The poor fellow was in a pitiable condition. The black had come partly off his hands; perspiration had left long white channels on his face; his feather head-

dress was mostly gone; one knee was bleeding; he limped.

Suzette threw her arms about his neck. "O my dear friend, my dear friend!" she exclaimed. She said "fer-end," and it sounded very droll — "My dear fer-end!"

Her dear friend had lost his alert bearing, and had become as timid as he had formerly been courageous and daring. He cast frightened looks at the bystanders, and remained mute, not daring to speak his mother tongue in the boss's presence.

"We've talked enough," said the mayor; "we must get to our daily work. Grigou, your granddaughter and your horse are restored to you; you may take them away. As for your savage, although he looks innocent enough, and has behaved in a very brave and humane manner, I shall put him in charge of the police. The whole village has been turned upside down since yesterday, and popular alarm must be quelled."

Jack clinched his fists. What abominable injustice! He had saved the child, and they treated him as if he were a criminal. The showman interposed, —

"He's white, just like us; and think how good he has been to my granddaughter!"

"He's a fine fellow, no doubt," said the mayor; "but

the people are very uneasy. We will arrange this later on. The council, moreover, has passed judgment on the case. I will read it to you. Here it is: —

"'It appearing that Grigou, the showman, keeps in his booth an animal with a human face, a sort of black man, that alarms the whole country, frightening children and old persons, and even poultry; it appearing, moreover, that he has run away with a child, or is accused of having done so, the council decides: —

"'1. The showman's savage, if he is caught, shall be put in charge of the police.

"'2. If he is kept at the booth, he shall be chained.

"'3. The showman is ordered to leave the country within the next forty-eight hours.'"

"This is great luck for me!" exclaimed Grigou. "I meet with misfortune, and you send me away!"

"And you chain me up because I've been good," murmured Jack. "If evil is punished in this world, ought not goodness to be rewarded?"

"They can do what they like," Suzette whispered in the ear of her "dear friend" — "I love you from my heart!"

The procession started — in front the police, and between them Jack, head down, crying, mocked at, jeered at, and limping. Then came the showman and

his granddaughter, and at a distance, bringing up the rear, Theodulus.

Ma'am Grigou was standing in the middle of the road. She saw them a good way off, and she lifted her arms and swung them about so expressively, that she was equal to an old-fashioned telegraph.

Jack's deliverance seemed to draw near. Suzette betrayed no surprise at coming to live with the showman. Being an acrobat's daughter, the occupation of her grandparents appeared to be quite natural. They had done wrong in trying to conceal it from her. She was very much more at home with them, and more at her ease, than with the farmer's family, where her wild spirits and madcap antics found little sympathy.

She told the story of her adventures with that gentle grace and those flashes of wilfulness which belonged to her. The old people were softened by her influence. The deep affection which she manifested for Jack was contagious. They, in turn, felt kindly toward the lad, and sought some way in which to testify to their gratitude.

Suzette, on the eve of returning to the farmhouse, sat on her grandfather's knees. She toyed with his mustache, smoothed his hair, and whispered in his ear one last request.

"Grandpa, dear, I want you to love my dear friend just as much as you love your little Suzette."

"And what is it that your dear friend wants?"

"He wants not to be a savage any more."

"It shall be as you wish, Suzette. I give my promise."

"O grandpa!"

That night, when the little girl was about to set out for the farm, accompanied by her grandmother, old Grigou said, —

"You can thank her, Jack; she has asked me to set you at liberty, and I've promised."

"Thank you, Suzette," said Jack. "Oh, I do thank you! But shall we never see each other again?"

Poor Jack's heart was full of sorrow. For the first time in his life, parting brought a feeling of profound regret. It seemed to him that he would be contented to be a savage all his life if Suzette were only there!

XXX.

AT THE NEUILLY FAIR.

DELIVERANCE would have been speedy for Jack if it had not been for old Grigou's misfortunes; and then, again, what was Jack to do with himself if he were set at liberty? The showman, his wife, and the lad held a consultation. They decided that they would remain in company for the rest of the season, and that Pipirikiki should make his appearance, newly painted and feathered, at the Neuilly Fair.

One day, as he sprang on the stage, having previously glanced over the audience from his place of retirement, he was very near swooning. With a gesture of alarm, which the spectators thought was inspired by fear of the resolute and confident air assumed by the audience, Jack recoiled to the very walls of the booth. In the "orchestra circle," in the very first row, he had seen his two comrades from the workshop, and the foreman, Mr. Griffin. He trembled lest his identity be discovered; but he soon saw by the interested expression

on their faces, where no astonishment whatever was exhibited, that to them he was not their former associate, Jack the thief, but Pipirikiki, the savage from the ocean isles. This conviction pleased him greatly.

When he sang, however, the quality of his voice, disguise it as he might, seemed to impress Mr. Griffin, who looked at him scrutinizingly; the tones thus heard aroused vague recollections. The impression passed, and Mr. Griffin did not recognize him.

"It's impossible that they should know me in this

makeup," thought Jack. "My mother herself, if living, would deny that I was her son. Jack the apprentice is no more; he is now simply a cannibal, who makes amusement for grown people, and scares little children."

Thus his thoughts ran while he was dancing; and

then all of a sudden a dog, giving signs of the most frantic joy, sprang on the stage, frolicked about him, bounced against his legs, and finally, with its hind paws on the cash-box (an empty show of financial solidity), leaped so high as to get its forefeet on Jack's breast, and to lick his face.

"Call off your dog," shouted old Grigou, "or I'll not

be responsible for the consequences! The savage would eat him up as quick as he would a raw chicken." Just now, however, it looked as if the dog would devour the savage.

"Bisquine!" called John, "Bisquine, come here!" But Bisquine, who had recognized her master, continued her ardent attentions, in spite of the showman's efforts to drive her away.

"That's very queer," said Mr. Griffin.

Bisquine kept licking Pipirikiki's face; and under her moistly affectionate caresses the black began to come off. The audience could see patches of pink skin beneath the paint.

"He's no savage — he's painted!" they called out on all sides.

One whole side of the victim's face was soon laid bare; and at the sight the two apprentices in the front row recognized their long-lost friend.

"Jack! It's Jack!" they exclaimed in amazement. "You can't fool Bisquine."

The showman was furious, and did not know which to blame most, his savage or the dog. The savage darted behind the curtain, and the dog followed him.

"Dirty beasts!" roared Grigou. He jumped on the

platform, intent upon pursuit. Mr. Griffin touched him on the arm.

"Just one word. If you know what's good for you, you'll let that boy and that dog alone."

The showman turned, with an ugly look in his eyes. "What affair is it of yours? Do you belong to the police? I don't take orders from anybody but the police. You mind your own business!"

The two apprentices stood with necks outstretched

toward the hiding-place of the savage, dazed with emotion. "Could it possibly have been Jack?" said John. His companion, eager to make sure, tried to get behind the screen, but was confronted by Ma'am Grigou, who struck him roughly in the back. John went to Johnnie's assistance; and meanwhile the discussion between Mr. Griffin and the showman was continued in very vigorous language.

"You've no right to detain this lad," said the foreman; "I shall appeal to the police."

At the mention of the police, Grigou, whose conscience was not altogether easy, speedily calmed down.

"Well, now, see here; we don't want any such talk as that. Everything can be arranged quietly. I took in the little chap when he was starving, and have kept him fed; in exchange for that he has helped me out with my show. One good turn deserves another. As you are his boss, if you want to take him away, you can; you don't need to call on the police for help." Then he shouted a summons, "Hey there, Feathers! come here!"

The savage did not seem to be animated by any desire to obey this order; in fact, the more they called him, the farther he shrank into his corner, with the determination not to come out.

"Go along; they want you, darkey. We know who you are now," said John, "thanks to Bisquine."

Bisquine, in fact, had manifested her joy so radiantly that Jack's face fairly shone with its reflected glory. The dear little beast looked with satisfaction at the friendly washing she had given him, panting with extended tongue — a very black tongue, be it said; for it had absorbed a large proportion of the coloring that had made Jack a savage.

"You are recognized," said Mr. Griffin. "Why do you try to hide away from us?"

"I'm not hiding," said Jack; "but I'm ashamed."

"You have reason enough for that," said the foreman, in a dry, harsh tone.

"Poor Jack, — he is so unhappy!" interposed John.

"And so very funny also," observed Johnnie.

The difficulty was to get him away. No doubt Jack would consent to go when he was assured that he would once more be pardoned, and that he was not going to be sent to prison; but he could not, of course, return to Paris masquerading as a savage.

"Dress yourself," Mr. Griffin commanded.

Dress himself in what? What had become of his clothes? Ma'am Grigou made a pretence of hunting for them; but it was only a pretence, for she had

sold them. After all, what was the use of talking about clothes at this stage of the affair. He couldn't put on clothes till he had got his feathers off.

They smuggled him into a cab, which Bisquine proceeded to occupy, with a comical air of proprietorship. Sitting by the side of their newly found comrade, John and Johnnie looked at him with some degree of alarm; for they had not yet recovered from their amazement. After a prolonged silence, filled with unspoken inquiry, John said, —

"Now tell us all about it."

"I'll tell you by and by," responded Jack, embarrassed by the stern inspection of Mr. Griffin.

"What has happened will happen again," said Mr. Griffin, "if you go on in the old way. Bisquine may lick the black from your face, but, white or black, savage you are, and savage you will remain; and rightly so, for your evil conduct will make you an outlaw among civilized people."

"I'll never do so any more," repeated the unhappy wretch, who had gone through too many trials not to be repentant. But would his repentance last when the effects of his punishment were no longer fresh in his memory?

XXXI.

GREAT EXCITEMENT IN MOON STREET

It was Mother Bonnet who got the first shock of surprise in Moon Street. When she opened the door and found herself face to face with a half black, be-feathered creature, she nearly swooned with fright. "It's the Evil One himself!" she shrieked; and then she crossed herself. The creature spoke in a whim-pering voice, —

"Dear Mother Bonnet!" it said.

The good old dame was still further astonished, and crossed herself again. "Heaven preserve us" she exclaimed; "he knows me by name!"

John took hold of one corner of her apron. "It's only Jack," he said.

"Yes, it's Jack," added Mr. Griffin, in serious con-firmation.

"Jack? Jack? Can it be possible!" Mother Bon-net raised her hands and let them fall in a gesture of complete stupefaction. Jack, come back in this guise,

looking like an imp of darkness, with feathers all over him? Where could he have been, the wretch, to get into such a mess as that?

You can easily imagine that a great sensation followed Jack's advent. The news ran all through the

quarter, and it was told from one to another, that a savage had come to live in Moon Street. The next day it was in all the newspapers. Crowds assembled before the house, and the police had all they could do to get the people to disperse. They shouted for the savage. Jack heard the roaring of the turbulent crowd, and trembled in every blackened limb.

The day after his arrival Mr. Dupont made him tell the story of his experiences. What should be done with the little sinner? When he first heard of Jack's return, Mr. Dupont had said, —

"Don't wash him; I want to make an example of him."

From this you might perhaps think that he intended to have Jack led around Moon Street with a ring in his nose, as a hair-dresser's advertisement; but Mr. Dupont was only joking when he said that. He had a much more serious purpose in view.

He determined on a judicial inquiry; and in the work-shop, after the men had gone, he organized a tribunal, and took his seat as presiding justice, with Mr. Griffin on his right, and Mother Bonnet on his left. The accused was seated on a stool before them. John and Johnnie represented the public. It was a solemn moment when Mr. Dupont said to Jack, —

"Prisoner, stand up!"

Mother Bonnet was unable to restrain her emotions. She was touched to the heart. She made believe blow her nose, but everybody could see that she was crying.

When Jack, in his ridiculous guise, stood up, a shiver ran through the audience. John and Johnnie were

greatly moved, and turned pale. Jack put his arm across his face, as if by covering his eyes he hoped to hide his shame. Mr. Griffin proceeded to address the prisoner. His voice was very serious; he reviewed Jack's life in a few words.

"It is now a year since you came to this establishment, and in that year you have made a very discreditable record. Having no liking for work, you have

sought only for means of diversion, and you have chosen the most reprehensible means to attain it. Wrong-doing is contagious. You led your comrades astray by getting them to go with you to the theatre. That was very bad; but your offence was pardoned. Then, loitering on an errand, you joined in a game of marbles with a gang of thieves, and had your jewellery stolen from you. Again you were pardoned. It was right that you should make good the loss caused by your shameful conduct. It was no more than fair that you should pay, out of your own earnings, for the jewellery you had lost. When the time approached for the final payment, you fell short in your savings, and then" —

"Have pity, sir!" Jack supplicated. Mr. Griffin was not softened. He went on, —

"And then the idea of a still greater crime came into your thoughts. Your comrades had a little store of money, and you discovered where it was kept. One night, with stealthy steps, like a malefactor, you stole from your bed down-stairs on tiptoe in the darkness, and went toward the place where the wealth you coveted was hidden" —

Mother Bonnet kept on saying to herself, "Ah, Heaven have mercy! Ah, Heaven have mercy!"

"Yes, I stole; I did steal; I am a thief!" said Jack; and he fell on his knees. Mr. Dupont turned toward Mr. Griffin, and said, "Go on."

"Have you considered sufficiently," Mr. Griffin continued, "the consequences of a theft which carried its own punishment with it? Remember, this money had been put aside for you, as a surprise. Those who were saving it up intended to say when the time came, 'Here, Jack, you are a thoughtless spendthrift; we have collected this money to save you from the results of your carelessness and neglect.' The money was, in fact, a testimonial of very rare and disinterested friendship. One day it disappeared. Who had taken it? The very person to whom it was to be given! Ah, decidedly, Jack, you were guilty of the basest ingratitude; you were suspected, convicted, and locked up, like a professional criminal, and you succeeded in escaping from confinement. You joined the travelling showmen; and this is the condition in which you return. Jack, answer me, — is not what I have said perfectly true?"

Profound silence fell upon the little company. Mr. Griffin asked again, "Jack, is it not true?"

In a voice so weak and low that it could scarcely be heard, — a voice like the soft, plaintive wail of an infant, — Jack responded, —

"It is true."

"Prisoner, you may be seated;" but Jack remained on his knees. Mr. Dupont went on; he had evidently come to a serious determination.

"The question now is," he said, "what is to be done with this confessed thief? Every crime must have its punishment. What punishment shall be visited upon him?"

Mother Bonnet now interposed. "It is my turn now to speak. Yes, Jack has been very wicked; he has done wrong, but he has been punished. Give him one more trial. Be merciful, Mr. Charles! He will promise his old Mother Bonnet not to do so any more. You will promise, will you not, Jack? There, you see, Mr. Charles, he nodded his head; he promises; he will not do so any more. Let us be merciful to those that do wrong and are sorry!"

"What is your advice, Mr. Griffin?"

"I believe that his repentance is genuine; he made that clear by trying to give back ten francs of the stolen money. But if we pardon him it will be for the third time, and in such affairs the third time is always the last."

"It is very clear, Mr. Griffin, that you are on the side of mercy. I cannot, however, inflict association

with a thief upon honest apprentices against their will. John, are you willing that he should remain?"

"Oh, yes, sir; I beg of you to let him do so."

"And you, Johnnie?"

"I also, sir."

"You are all too lenient," Mr. Dupont declared. "I am in favor of more severity. Promises are easily made, and repentance is easily forgotten. What pledge has this miserable wretch given us? None. If in all his career, filled as it has been with shameful actions, we could find the record of but one good deed pleading in his behalf, — one single, noble, generous deed, coming straight from the heart" —

At this moment a furious scratching was heard at the door; it was opened, and Bisquine rushed joyously in, sniffing the air with her moist nose, and shaking her tail with pleasure. She ran to her master, who was still kneeling, as if to testify to her friendship and gratitude.

"Yes," she seemed to say in the language of affection; "one good deed at least stands to his credit, —

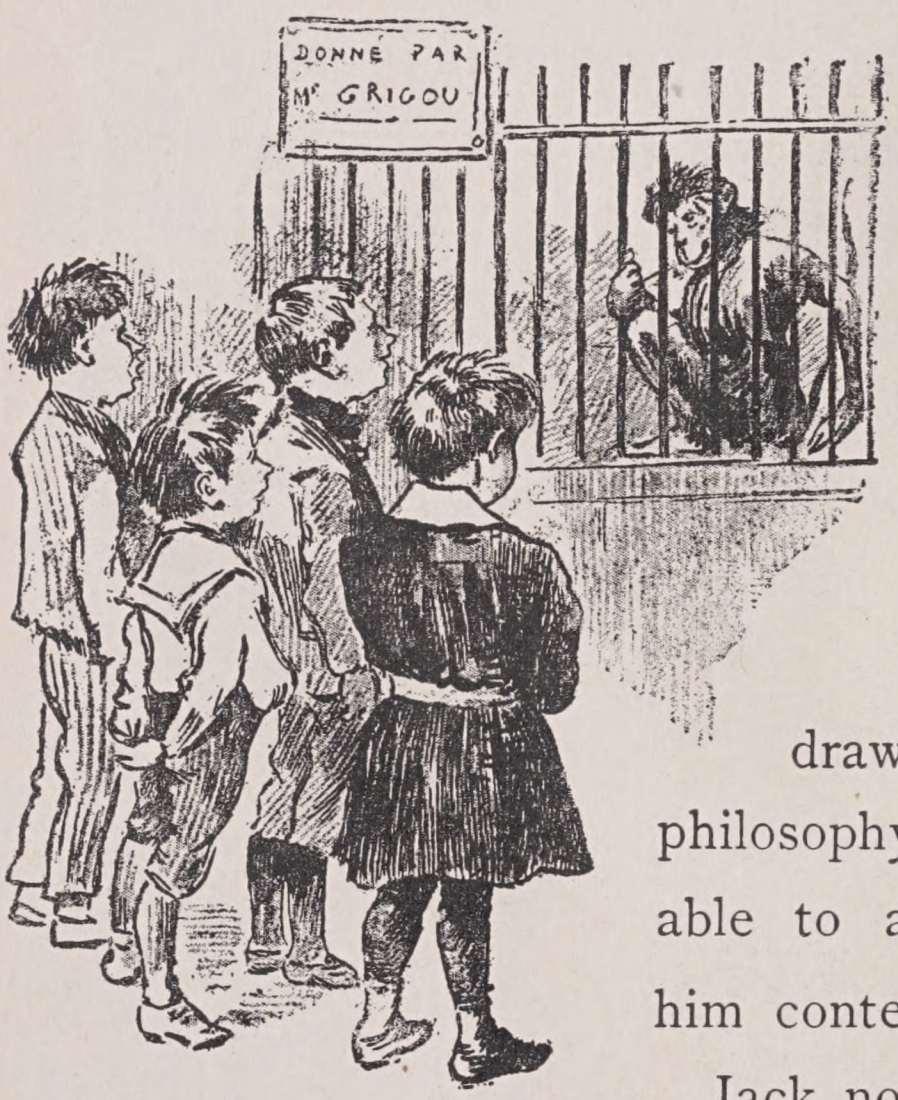
he saved a poor dog that was being abused, and he did this with no hope of reward."

"Stand up, Jack," said Mr. Dupont; "you will remain with us. Bisquine has saved you as you once saved her. If wrong-doing calls for punishment, it is no less true that a generous action should have its recompense."

At this joyful announcement every one drew a long breath. Johnnie outdid Bisquine in frantic demonstrations of delight. John, more reserved in manner, made up his mind to watch over his comrade, and to keep him from falling into his old ways. As for Jack, they took him to the dormitory, and proceeded to scrub him. They soaked him ir a barrel up to his neck; and a week later he was still soaking.

EPILOGUE.

OLD GRIGOU no longer follows the calling of wandering showman. A savage like Jack is not discovered every day in the year. Losing Jack, he lost his fortune. He found employment as laborer on the farm where his granddaughter was being brought up.



Theodulus, at the same farm, draws a cart; and his philosophy, which is adaptable to all callings, makes him content.

Jack now works alongside of his comrades, John and Johnnie, and is thought well of.

Suzette has been to make a visit in Moon Street,

and her story of Jack's noble behavior has awakened profound sympathy. Since then, everybody has joined with Suzette in calling Jack "dear friend."

And Zany? He went back to his cage, goaded by hunger. He is at the Zoölogical Gardens, enjoying a government pension, — a sort of official monkey, as it were, who for the favors bestowed upon him repays the public as a monkey naturally would.

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